

Ballet

TODAY

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WORLD NEWS AND PICTURES



THE STORY OF THE PAS DE QUATRE BY ANTON DOLIN

DECEMBER 1961

TWO SHILLINGS



picture of the month

A dramatic new study of Belinda Wright, prima ballerina of London's Festival Ballet, who is to dance the Sugar Plum Fairy during the Company's Christmas season of *Nutcracker* at the Royal Festival Hall. Photo by Ken Ross-Mackenzie

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EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY ESTELLE HERF

COVER PICTURES

top right : Rudolf Nureyev

centre : Jacqueline Rayet

left-hand corner : Erik Bruhn

right : Anton Dolin at La Scala, Milan,
rehearsing l to r : Fiorella Cova, Carla
Fracci, Elettra Morini, Vera Colombo,

in *The Pas de Quatre*

Photo : John Ettlinger

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Rudolf Nureyev at Drury Lane rehearsing *Poème Tragique*
choreographed for him by Frederick Ashton for
Dame Margot's Gala Matinée

editor's log

REMINISCING about his life and work as a writer, J. B. Priestley entitled the series "I had the time". The title suggested itself to him he said because people often told him they could have written a book . . . if only they had the time.

This is a common delusion of course, and invariably an excuse for lack of talent. The truly creative artist makes the time, no matter what the circumstances. I am certain that if it were possible to analyse that intangible thing we call star quality "making the time" would rank high on the list of necessary attributes. Over the years I have noticed that it is always the busiest people who find time for the little courtesies, the thoughtful gesture, the kind word for others. Alicia Markova found the time to go out to Golder's Green during the "International Stars of the Ballet" week. Her visit backstage after the show was deeply appreciated by the artists, Claire Sombert, one of our brilliant young stars of today, was full of it. "She looked fabulous" she told me, and added "I think

she looks so beautiful because there is so much beauty *within* her".

Margot Fonteyn never forgets the personal touch in her dealings with others. At her usual press party preceding the annual Gala at Drury Lane Dame Margot introducing Nureyev to us asked the critics and newspapermen present not to ask "political" questions. "He is a guest in my house" she said, "and I am sure you will treat him kindly and make him welcome to this country". I was deeply impressed by their skilful avoidance of anything in the nature of an embarrassing question. It was obvious that they were leaning over backwards to respect Dame Margot's wishes, not because she is a great star, but because they like and respect her as a person.

And, coming nearer home, I would like to relate a personal experience which emphasises the point I have made in this little homily. On publication day of the November issue of our magazine a telegram arrived at *Ballet Today* office. "Thank you" it read "for the beautifully worded

article. Anton Dolin." The telegram had been sent two hours after receipt of the copy containing the article "A day with Anton Dolin", Mr. Dolin must have dispatched it just before leaving for the theatre he was playing at Streatham Hill. Millions of words and countless books have been written about this artist, but he still found the time to thank a writer.

And if, in all kindness, I be allowed to point a moral in this story, I am not suggesting that dancers should send a telegram every time anyone writes a few kind words about them . . . but I have heard of bouquets which have gone unacknowledged . . . often the senders have made personal sacrifices to buy them. How often do you read books or criticisms of the ballet . . . unless *your* name is mentioned? . . . you should nevertheless be interested in everything which has a bearing on your chosen career. What about the performances given by other great artists which you did not bother to attend? . . . you can learn a great deal from them.

Our next issue is a combined one (January/February) to be published 11th January, 1962.



A new photograph of Peggy van Praagh
taken onstage at Covent Garden
Photo: Roy Round

Nureyev told me that he did not like to dance too frequently, not because he disliked work, but because it was necessary for him to go away and think about his performances, to improve on them, to work with the choreographer, and try to better what had gone before. He had already been to see the work of many companies and choreographers, and his ambition was to see many more. With this in mind he goes to America this year to see Balanchine at work. Asked if he would finally like to settle down in one country, he replied "of course, but first I must try to see all the great masters at work and learn all I can". I have no doubt he will find the time.

And you could make this one of your New Year resolutions.

NUREYEV mentioned to me that preliminary plans were being made for him to team up with Erik Bruhn, Sonia Arova and Rosella Hightower to fill a number of engagements in the near future. Before they left London (after Dame Margot's Gala) Mr. George Hall arranged talks with Mr. Victor Hochhauser to discuss the appearance of the foursome at two concerts at the Albert Hall in January 1962. In effect this plan was agreed, but of course the matter does not rest there. Nureyev is a stateless person and certain formalities have to be complied with. Special permission was given for him to appear at Dame Margot's *matinée* because it was a Royal performance and he received no fee.

In the meantime he appears with de Cuevas in Italy and a grand Gala at Munich. When his contract with the de Cuevas Company expires at the end of this year he will not renew it.

The four artists plan to rehearse and make their base at Rosella Hightower's studio in Cannes, where Miss Hightower is combining her new career of teaching with guest artist appearances with the de Cuevas Company (alternating with Vyroubova in leading rôles).

However if all goes well the four artists will make their appearance at the Albert Hall on the 10th and 11th January. After that they are to appear in Paris on the 14th for a grand Gala and the next day Bruhn and Nureyev fly to America for appearances in that country. There is also talk of Nureyev and Bruhn appearing with the Royal Ballet in London in April, but there is no official confirmation of this at the moment. Rumour also has it that there will be a tour of England in May.

ON HOLIDAY this year I met a doctor who had given up his practice to live in the sun. He was not, he said, going to concern himself any more with the minor ills of people since humanity itself was bent on self-destruction. To run away is no way out of any problem, but I see his point of view. At times, whatever work you may be doing, it seems petty and pointless in comparison with the troubles of a sad, sick world. On such days I have asked myself "does it really matter whether so-and-so gave a good performance, or this or that dancer has danced in Timbuctoo? Are we, in ballet, living in a little stagnant backwater, remote from the broad, relentless, pulsing stream of life?" And, as if in answer to my question, my mail always brings me confirmation that we must all do the work nearest to hand. Dr. Wilfried Hofmann, whose work takes him abroad to one of the most troubled spots

in the world wrote to ask: "Has any other correspondent of *Ballet Today* been searched for weapons when entering an Opera House? Here everyone is carefully checked on arrival, and, once in, no-one is allowed to leave, so that bomb-throwers cannot sneak away. During the performance the Opera is isolated by heavily armed units, nevertheless the café next door blew up last night. Yet, with nothing but killing, bombing, fear and hate, we find ourselves amongst people who receive *Ballet Today* as a messenger of civilisation and peace."

On another page I print a letter from a Royal Ballet fan in Tokyo "...our eyes were wet with sorrow when we said our farewells... our hearts are always together, even though we live in different countries..."

I hope that the dance and those concerned with it will continue to bring a message of civilisation, peace and joy during the coming year.

IT WAS a sad day when we heard that Peggy van Praagh had left Australia after the closing season of the Borovansky Ballet, and as the months went by it seemed as if her efforts to continue the Company after the death of its great founder had been doomed to failure. But as one door shuts another opens, and now we have news of a project which it is hoped will eventually lead to a permanent national company for Australia. The Elizabethan Theatre Trust, which is responsible for the promotion of the arts in Australia, and equivalent to our British Arts Council, is to be given an extra grant by the Federal Government and the whole of this increase will be devoted to promoting a ballet company.

Miss van Praagh has signed a two-year contract as artistic director of the Company, as yet unnamed, and will leave for Australia in March or April next year to commence her duties. Although of course plans are as yet in the first stages, it is expected that the Company will begin operations in September 1962, and Miss van Praagh hopes that many of the dancers who were on the latter part of the Borovansky tour will rejoin her.

WRITING to thank me for attending a performance of their Company, The Harlequin Ballet, Barbara Vernon and John Gregory said "it was very noble of you to give up a Covent Garden evening to come and see us in the wilds of Battersea." On the night I thought so too, as I sat on my hard seat at the Town Hall, gloomily noted the small stage and the dreary looking people coming in from the cold wet streets outside. The title of the opening ballet *Fall-Out* did nothing to raise my spirits. Despite the explanation which preceded the ballet, the uninitiated were not at all sure what it was all about, and to those who cared it seemed a pity that John Gregory's interesting stage patterns did not get a chance to emerge because the stage was so shallow.

This was followed by *Phantasie Classique*, *Capuchino*, *Divertissement* (a series of pas de deux, folk dances, and the *Mechanical Doll* specially arranged for the Company by Tamara Karsavina). The final item on the programme was *Harovad*, Ukrainian Folk Dances with choreography by John Gregory, and his wife Barbara Vernon playing the Balalaika.

Continued on page 20

THE PAS DE QUATRE

by

ANTON DOLIN



Her Majesty's Theatre London, 1845

THE PAS DE QUATRE, 1845

IN HIS "Reminiscences of the Opera", published in 1864 by Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, Benjamin Lumley, the director of Her Majesty's Theatre, London, tells that having engaged for the 1845 season the danseuses Marie Taglioni, Fanny Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucille Grahn, it was his ambition to present all four of them together in a new divertissement. "But ambition," wrote Lumley, "even seconded by managerial will, scarcely sufficed to put so audacious a project into execution. No one could be more aware than myself of the difficulties I should have to encounter. The government of a great state was but a trifle compared to the government of such subjects as those whom I was supposed to be able to command; for these were subjects who considered themselves far above mortal control, or more properly speaking, each was a queen in her own right—alone, absolute, supreme!"

Unfortunately, Lumley has not recorded for our delight what arguments, or perhaps blandishments he had recourse to, in inducing the intractable ladies to accede to his request, but he succeeded brilliantly, and the necessary arrangements for the new divertissement were put in hand. Cesare Pugni—in whose ballet *Eoline* Lucille Grahn had made her London debut on the opening night of the season—was commissioned to write the music for the new *Pas de Quatre* and the choreography was to be the work of the ballet-master, Jules Perrot. When the times for rehearsal had been arranged, the first hitch occurred; it was feared that Carlotta Grisi would not be able to make the journey from Paris to London in time. But Mr. Lumley was determined not to let material obstacles ruin his project, and he arranged for relays of horses to be standing by to convey the danseuse from Paris to Calais, where she found awaiting her a ship which had been chartered from the Steam Navigation Company; and for the last stage of the journey a special train had been engaged to transport Grisi from Dover to London.

To arrange for four dancers, three of whom were only too intensely aware of their own importance and 'star' status, must have been a maddening and nerve-racking ordeal, and Perrot certainly was endowed with tact and diplomacy of no

mean order, for, to quote Lumley, "Every twinkle of each foot in every *pas* had to be nicely weighed in the balance, so as to give no preponderance. Each danseuse was to shine in her peculiar style and grace to the last stretch of perfection, but no one was to outshine the others—unless in their own individual belief." But at last everything was arranged to the entire satisfaction of everybody concerned; the date of the presentation of *The Pas de Quatre* had been announced, and those who looked at the theatre list printed in the issue of "The Times" for 12th July saw the following statement:—

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE

This evening, Saturday, July 12th, will be performed Donizetti's celebrated opera *Anna Bolena*. (Note: '*Anna Bolena*' made Grisi.) Between the acts of the opera will be presented, for the first time, a new *Pas de Quatre* composed expressly by M. Perrot for Mlle. Taglioni, Mlle. Cerrito, Mlle. Grahn and Mlle. Carlotta Grisi (her last appearance but three). To conclude with the first tableau of the admired ballet of *La Esmeralda*. La Esmeralda, Mlle. Carlotta Grisi.

THE GREAT DAY

The great day had arrived, and on the stage of Her Majesty's Theatre, Jules Perrot was conducting his final rehearsal, while, in his own room, Benjamin Lumley, with his lawyers, was deeply engrossed in discussing the final arrangements for his purchase of the theatre. Suddenly, records Lumley, "poor Perrot rushed in unannounced into my presence in a state of intense despair. Without regard for the serious conclave assembled, he uttered frantic exclamations, tore his hair, and at last found breath to say all was over—that the *Pas de Quatre* had fallen to the ground and never could be given!"

With difficulty the unfortunate ballet-master was calmed down to a sufficient state of reason to explain the cause of his anguish. The completion of the purchase of the opera house was suspended for a few minutes and the explanation came as follows:—"When all was ready, I had desired Perrot to regulate the order in which the separate *pas* of each danseuse should come. The place of honour, the last

in such cases (as in regal processions) had been ceded without over much hesitation to Mademoiselle Taglioni. Of the remaining ladies who claimed equal rights founded on talent and popularity, neither would appear before the other. 'Mon Dieu!' exclaimed the ballet-master in distress, 'Cerrito ne veut pas commencer avant Carlotta—ni Carlotta avant Cerrito, et il n'y a pas moyen de les faire bouger; tout est fini.' 'The solution is easy,' said I to poor Perrot. 'The question of talent must be decided by the public. But in this dilemma there is one point on which I am sure the ladies will be frank. Let the oldest take her unquestionable right to the envied position.' The ballet-master smote his forehead, smiled assent, and bounded from the room upon the stage. The judgment of the manager was announced. The ladies tittered, laughed, drew back, and were now as much disinclined to accept the right of position as they had been eager to claim it. The ruse succeeded. The management of the affair was left in Monsieur Perrot's hands."

PAEANS OF PRAISE

On the night of 12th July, 1845, *The Pas de Quatre* was presented at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, to a delighted audience; it was a colossal success, and at once became the talk of the whole town. In clubs and ballrooms, at dinner parties and at shop-counters it was the one burning topic of conversation. Its fame crossed the Channel and foreign journals devoted much space to descriptions of its wonders, and even ambassadors gave long eulogistic accounts of the new *Pas de Quatre* in their official despatches!

The English Press welcomed the new divertissement with paeans of praise. "The Times" of 14th July, having stated that *The Pas de Quatre* was "the greatest Terpsichorean exhibition that ever was known in Europe—we repeat the phrase—that ever was known in Europe," then described the first performance:—"Taglioni, Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucille Grahn were all combined in one *pas de quatre*, and such a combination was altogether unprecedented, nay, might have been declared impossible. For secret history will ooze its way even through the pores of a curtain, and then do we learn

that these ethereal-looking creatures whom mortals call danseuses, and who appear to live solely for the purpose of floating, bounding and smiling, in an atmosphere perfumed by the bouquets of admirers, are not remarkable for love towards each other, and that the task of getting four of them into one *pas* supposes a power of persuasion and argumentation bordering on the preternatural. There is not the slightest doubt that even to half-past 10 o'clock on Saturday night there were sundry sceptics who believed that the announced '*Pas*' would never take place, who thought that the words in the bill were merely some *lusus typographae* without real signification, or at any rate that some unlucky apple of discord would be thrown among the fair party, creating a sort of centrifugal force which would render futile all attempts to re-gather the fragments of the annihilated *pas*. Certainly people had seen a *pas de deux* by Elssler and Cerrito, danced amid an enthusiastic warfare that threatened to revive the blue and green factions of the Hippodrome, but then—how great the difference between two and four! For the difficulty in these cases does not merely progress in the geometrical ratio of the number of artists, but must be estimated by squares, like the velocity of falling bodies. Therefore we say, when the curtain rose for the impossible *Pas de Quatre*, and the marvellous four entered all in a line, hand holding hand as a testimony of amity, the house burst forth into a tumult, not only of admiration, but of amazement. There was the problem visibly solved—the feat that was manifestly impracticable was accomplished—Columbus had placed the egg erect. All came forward and curtsied—and then what a portentous pause! The audience were all in expectation as to what would happen under circumstances so unparalleled, and the partisan feeling doubtless worked high in many a bosom! A large shower of yellow papers descended into the pit, apparently from the gallery slips, but whether these contained an epic poem, an ode, or a pastoral drama, in honour of the occasion, we are unable to say, not having had the felicity to catch one.* The slow movement of the *pas* began, and the four ladies formed in a serious of groups, matchless for taste and elegance, Taglioni usually occupying the central position. Then came the quick movement with the variations. By the way, do our readers know why the steps which each danseuse executes *sola* in the course of a *grand pas* are called 'variations?' If they do, they are better informed than we are. Then we say came the variations—and here was the period for the greatest excitement, now was the question to be decided how each would put forth her strength. Taglioni displayed all her commanding manner, relying much on that advancing step, of which we believe she was the inventor, and astonishing by some of her bounds. Lucile Grahn, a disciple of the same school, danced with a breadth and vigour which showed a determination not to be outdone by her elder competitors. Cerrito entered into the contest with that revolving step which invariably delights; and Carlotta Grisi, forming a striking contrast, gave a piquant, coquettish sort of variation with her wonted fascination. Perrot, the inventor of this wonderful *pas*, conducted it at the wing,

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE,
 ITALIAN OPERA HOUSE.
MADILE CARLOTTA GRISI'S
 BENEFIT AND LAST APPEARANCE BUT ONE.
THIS EVENING,
THURSDAY, July 17th, 1845,
 Will be performed, Master's Opera,
COSI' FAN TUTTE.
 Fioriligi, Made CASTELLAN,
 Donabella, Made RITA BORIO,
 Despina, Made ROSSI CACCIA,
 Fernando, Sig. MARIO,
 Guglielmo, Sig. F. LABLACHE,
 Don Alfonso, Sig. LABLACHE.
 Between the Acts, A NEW PAS DE QUATRE, by
 Madile TAGLIONI, Madile CERRITO, Madile L. GRAHN,
 and Madile C. GRISI.
 After which, Scorching Fire
ANNA BOLENA.
 Percy, Sig. MORIANI,
 Margaret, Madile BRAMBILLA,
 Anne Boleyn, Made GRISI.
 To conclude with the Best Tables of
LA GISELLE.
 Giselle, Madile C. GRISI,
 Myrion, Madile F. STEPHAN,
 Blanche, M. BERTRAND,
 Duke of Milan, M. PERROT.

and might be seen from the left side of the house. The exertions of the danseuses were certainly equalled by his own. He beat time, he fumed, he fidgeted in an agony of zeal, the weight of his own work being heavy to bear. Never was such a *pas* before. The excitement which a competition so extraordinary produced in the artistes roused them to a pitch of energy which would have been impossible under other circumstances, and hence everyone did her utmost, the whole performance being a complete inspiration. We shall not say one word as to which we think the best, or the second best—not one word tending to dissolve the harmony that has resulted in so wonderful an exhibition. All did admirably; none left anything to desire. The manifestation of enthusiasm on the part of the audience was scarcely less remarkable than the manifestation of energy on the part of the artistes. The whole long *pas* was danced to a running sound of applause, which, after each variation, swelled to a perfect hurricane, the furore of partisanship being added to the weight of general admiration. Bouquets flow from every point in immense profusion as each danseuse came forward, so that they had to curtsy literally in the midst of a shower of floral gifts. Cerrito's wreaths and nosegays were more than she could hold in both her arms. Many of the bouquets were demolished by the fall and scattered their particles about, so that the front of the stage was almost covered with flower leaves."

A CROWN FOR TAGLIONI

Five days later, when he can be said to have had ample time in which to form a considered opinion, as he had seen not only the first, but also the second performance of *The Pas de Quatre*, the critic for "The Illustrated London News" issued on 19th July, 1845, wrote:—"Every other feeling was merged in admiration when the four great dancers commenced the series of picturesque groupings with which this performance opens. We can safely say we

have never witnessed a scene more perfect in all its details. The greatest of painters, in his loftiest flights, could hardly have conceived, and certainly never executed, a group more faultless and more replete with grace and poetry than that formed by these four danseuses; Taglioni in the midst, her head thrown backwards, apparently reclining in the arms of her sister nymphs. Could such a combination have taken place in the ancient palmy days of art, the pencil of the painter and the song of the poet would have alike been employed to perpetuate its remembrance. No description can render the exquisite and almost ethereal grace of movement and attitude of those great dancers, and those who have witnessed the scene may boast of having once, at least, seen the perfection of the art of dancing, so little understood. There was no affectation, no apparent exertion or struggle for effect on the part of the gifted artistes; and though they displayed their utmost resources, there was a simplicity and ease, the absence of which would have completely broken the spell they threw around the scene. Of the details of this performance it is difficult to speak. In the solo steps executed by each danseuse, each in turn seemed to claim pre-eminence. Where every one in her own style is perfect, peculiar individual taste alone may balance in favour of one or the other, but the award of public applause must be equally bestowed; and, for our own part, we confess that our penchant for the peculiar style, and our admiration for the dignity, the repose and exquisite grace which characterise Taglioni, and the dancer who has so brilliantly followed the same track, Lucile Grahn, did not prevent our warmly appreciating the charming archness and twinkling steps of Carlotta Grisi, or the wonderful flying leaps and revolving bounds of Cerrito. Though, as we have said, each displayed her utmost powers, the emulation of the fair dancers was, if we may trust appearances, unaccompanied by envy. Every time a shower of bouquets descended, on the conclusion of a solo *pas* by one or other of the fair ballerine, her sister dancers came forward to assist her in collecting them; and both on Saturday and on Tuesday did Cerrito offer to crown Taglioni with a wreath which had been thrown in homage to the queen of the dance."

RESEARCH NOTES

Three points arising out of the 1845 production and presentation of *The Pas de Quatre* need investigating:—

- (1) Was *The Pas de Quatre* only ever performed once?
 - (2) Was it arranged at the request of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria?
 - (3) Was it performed in the presence of the Queen?
- (1) *The Pas de Quatre* was very certainly not unique in that it was only danced once, for the critic of "The Illustrated London News", whom I have already quoted, refers to two performances, 'on Saturday and on Tuesday,' and Lumley himself in his "Reminiscences of the Opera" states: "The excitement occasioned by the announcement of the wonderful *pas* had been intense among the frequenters of Her Majesty's Theatre, and accordingly the theatre was crowded to suffocation, not only on the first, but on every night when it was given."

* See review from the "Morning Post" of 14th July, 1845.

THE PAS DE QUATRE
as depicted in the Brandard Lithograph



from left to right
CARLOTTA GRISI, FANNY CERRITO,
kneeling MARIE TAGLIONI, LUCILE GRAHN

FOUR PERFORMANCES

I have examined the theatre list printed in the issues of "The Times" for the month of July 1845, with the greatest possible care, and am able to state with absolute certainty that there were in all four performances of *The Pas de Quatre*; it was danced on 12th July, 15th July, 17th July and the final performance was given on 19th July, 1845.

(2) Was *The Pas de Quatre* arranged at the request of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria? The quotation which follows is an extract from the programme note on *The Pas de Quatre* of 1845 in the souvenir programme of "Ballet Theatre" for their 1945-1946 tour: "This *Pas de Quatre*, known to the present generation of dance lovers only from A. E. Chalon's famous lithograph of the four great nineteenth century dancers, Taglioni, Cerrito, Grisi and Grahn, was originally arranged to the music of Cesare Pugni by Jules Perrot and first performed at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, in the presence of Queen Victoria on 12th July, 1845. Although the Queen-Empress could effect this 'pas de quatre' (a dance of four) by the four greatest ballerinas of their day, no managerial inducements could make these life-long rivals repeat the performance." Seldom can so much dubious, if not definitely erroneous, information have been disseminated in so few words. Anyone reading that programme note could only conclude that "*The Pas de Quatre*" was arranged at the behest of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, in whose presence its one and only performance was given. It is known definitely that *The Pas de Quatre* was danced on four occasions, but what evidence is there in support of the statement that it was arranged at the request of the Queen? In his book, "A Pageant of the Dance and Ballet" published by Jarrolds in 1935, Mark Edward Perugini has written: "The climax of a great season came in July of that year when, at the request of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, *The Pas de Quatre* was arranged for the four great dancers, Taglioni, Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi, and Lucile Grahn." Had the Queen made such a request it is incredible that Lumley should have omitted to mention the fact, but have claimed the idea of *The Pas de Quatre* as his own, for he has stated clearly, "it was my ambition to unite them all in one striking divertissement."

It does not seem to have been his habit to claim other people's ideas as his own, for, of the occasion—in 1843—on which Her Majesty did make a request, Lumley has recorded that "the chief excitement of the evening was produced by the charming 'pas de deux' between Fanny Elssler and Cerrito. This conjunction of the two great planets of La Danse was the result of a desire expressed by the Queen."

ROYAL PERFORMANCE?

(3) The third and last question: Was *The Pas de Quatre* performed in the presence of the Queen?

In "Modern Dancing and Dancers" published in 1912 by Grant Richards, Ltd., J. E. Crawford Fritch has written:—"In England the ballet may be said to have reached its apogée on the 12th July, 1845. On that memorable day, four of the foremost dancers of the age, Marie Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito and Lucile Grahn, danced a 'pas de quatre' before Queen Victoria." J. E. Crawford Fritch appears to me to have made a perfectly definite statement; there is nothing obscure, nothing ambiguous about it and it is, in

my opinion, capable of only one interpretation—he tells me that Queen Victoria was present at the first performance of *The Pas de Quatre* on 12th July, 1845. But was it a fact? Did the Queen see the first performance of *The Pas de Quatre*? Benjamin Lumley does not say that the Queen was in the theatre on that memorable night, and the critic of the "Illustrated London News" makes no reference whatever to her presence at either the first or second performance, and had she been there, it is unthinkable that he should not have informed his readers of the fact.

Queen Victoria did not visit Her Majesty's Theatre on the night of 12th July, 1845, and therefore she did not see the first performance of *The Pas de Quatre*, for the issue of "The Times" for 14th July, 1845, prints a list of the distinguished people who were present at the performance, and the Queen's name does not head the list. Although I feel certain that Queen Victoria did not see the first performance of *The Pas de Quatre*, she did see the penultimate performance on 17th July, 1845, for in the issue of "The Times" for 18th July, 1845, I found the following review:—"Mozart's 'Cosi Fan Tutte' was performed last night by desire of Her Majesty, who with Prince Albert, attended the theatre. . . . The opera terminated without any particular enthusiasm, although the house was crowded. But on the repetition of the great *Pas de Quatre*, the spirit of the audience was awakened in good earnest. Allowing somewhat for the decline of curiosity, we may say that the excitement of last night almost equalled that of Saturday. Each danseuse received her round of bouquets; each had her own thunder of applause. This 'Pas' actually improves on a second view, having so many varieties that some feature is almost sure to escape observation. Now one artiste seems to take the lead, now another starts forward, 'till the changing objects dazzle the eye of the spectator.' At the end the four were called and brought with them Perrot, to whom a special bouquet was thrown. The inventive genius gallantly parted the flowers and, having flung one to each of the ladies, bowed to the audience."

NOTE: I append three reviews of the 1845 *Pas de Quatre* from London newspapers, and one from the journal "The Spectator."

THE OBSERVER

Sunday, 13th July, 1845

"The event of the evening's entertainment, however, was the combination of the four first dancers of this great establishment in one piece. Taglioni, Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucile Grahn executed conjointly a new *Pas de Quatre* composed by Perrot expressly for the occasion in a fashion which, perhaps, was never before witnessed on the stage of this or any other theatre. To be properly appreciated, it must be witnessed; no description could do justice to its many beauties."

THE MORNING POST

14th July, 1845

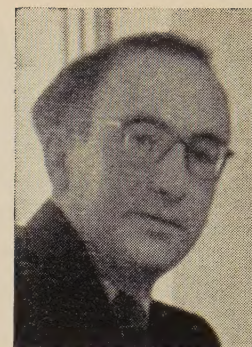
"We are at a loss to find expression to describe the aspect of Her Majesty's Theatre on Saturday night. The coup d'oeil before the proscenium was splendid beyond measure—the excitement and enthusiasm so great that the spectators below could scarce retain their seats, whilst the bodies of those above were thrust from the boxes, at the same time that every means of

applause were employed that could be devised for hand, foot or voice. The 'pas' of Saturday night is the most extraordinary choreographic feat and combination of talent on record. The only approach to such an effort being the 'pas de deux' on the same boards betwixt Cerrito and Elssler, which drew such crowds and made the whole town run mad, for then it was deemed that such an exhibition could not be surpassed. The 'pas de deux' was introduced to celebrate the visit in state of Her Majesty to the theatre. The 'Pas de Quatre' most nobly marks another propitious event. This, we think, is incumbent upon us to notice first, for it is connected with the fortunes of Her Majesty's Theatre. We fear there are few—very few indeed—amongst the crowds that fashion and curiosity lead to this magnificent theatre—the focus of the season's attraction—who ever remember its interests. This has been proved by years of the most untoward proceedings. Some injudicious friend of Cerrito, with as much folly as bad taste, showered from the hot region of the gods, placards of three-hands breadth, in every possible colour, containing an address and a sonnet in Italian to the fair ballerina's eyebrow, of which the tendency appears, so far as we could follow the author, in nubibus, to prove that there is as great a difference between any other dancer and Fanny Cerrito as there is betwixt a mushroom and a cedar of Lebanon—"rien que cela!" The votaries in the pit were in dreadful alarm for an instant, thinking the ceiling of the theatre was giving way, but a roar of laughter soon followed; which, by-the-by, was renewed later, when another equally injudicious partisan of this bounding Neapolitan emptied a whole basketful of bouquets on her head. A worse compliment could not be paid. 'Good wine needs no bush' says Shakespeare. When the four danseuses suddenly appeared on the stage, bright as sylphs just dropped from the clouds, the whole house was electrified with astonishment; then burst forth a simultaneous explosion of applause, sudden, sharp and loud as that of a broadside. The *pas* throughout was admirable, and did the greatest credit to the artistic genius of Perrot; but the grouping which preceded the solos was the most remarkably graceful and pictorial. The effect must be seen, as not only to be described but to be believed. The marvellous power of the unrivalled four allowing of their assuming attitudes, no other dancers could take and still less maintain; such poses have been seen on canvas, but never incarnated in living forms. Taglioni was the centre figure of every group, and to this position she is justly entitled, from her immense and well-earned reputation. Never was the poetry of motion over mere physical beauty more strikingly displayed. Wonderful as are her young compeers, Taglioni maintained her 'pride of place' throughout. As to the other fair dancers—they cannot be called rivals—nothing could appear more strikingly different than their several styles, and, although perhaps one or two at first felt a feeling not a little hostile, they appeared themselves so struck by the above fact that they ultimately looked all smiles, mutually congratulating and applauding each other; all joining finally in presenting to Taglioni a crown of laurel as the mistress mind of all. It would be vain to attempt to portray the solos of the three junior dancers. They each had two variations—an adagio and an allegro of admirable music—to perform alone. Cerrito

Continued on page 16

LONDON REVIEWS

by FERNAU HALL



INTERNATIONAL STARS OF THE BALLET

THE first of the two programmes shown at the Golders Green Hippodrome (during the week beginning 16th October) ended very well with the *Don Quixote* pas de deux, performed by Sonia Arova and Erik Bruhn. Many performances by Erik Bruhn in the great classical rôles have established him as one of the world's greatest danseurs nobles; his style is so pure, noble and poetic that one inevitably associates him with romantic rôles such as Albrecht, but at Golders Green he showed just as much flair for bravura and technical feats of virtuosity: it was a joy to see how he transformed a standard pirouette (with the foot coming to the knee) by giving it a whip-like quality, quite in tune with the whole quality of this pas de deux. It was regrettable that this great artist—easily the finest performer in the show—made only one appearance during the evening.

Sonia Arova, once well-known in this country through her appearances with the International Ballet and the Metropolitan Ballet, made a welcome re-appearance at Golders Green. With her strong technique and bold personality she was well cast in the *Don Quixote* pas de deux—though she suffered from a version by Oboukhoff which omitted the *pas de cheval*, usually the clou of any ballerina's performance.

Unfortunately we had to wait a long time for this fine item, and far too many of the other items were disappointing—usually because of the bad choreography. Lifar is a choreographer so lacking in imagination and taste that it is a mystery why dancers go on using his work, and at Golders Green he was represented by two works showing all his faults. *La Mort du Cygne* was particularly offensive because it took the form of a travesty of the famous dance which Fokine created for Pavlova: Lifar introduced a man to shoot down the swan and then dance with her as she died. But the nadir of bad taste was reached in *Prayer*, choreographed and danced by Michel Renault to sombre music from a great symphony of Beethoven. After the first performance the management wisely removed this item from the programme.

The solo to create the strongest impression was *Prelude*, choreographed by Janine Charrat to music by J. S. Bach and danced by Claire Sombert. For this item Janine Charrat used a neo-classical style with certain movements inspired by modern dance, and Claire Sombert was severely dressed in overall tights which gave a clear view of her splendid physique. There was no great harmony of style between music and choreography, but Charrat adapted her enchainements to the music with intelligence, and the style suited Claire Sombert perfectly; the rather strained facial expression which spoiled her interpretation of the "Grisi" solo in *The Pas de Quatre* was

admirably in place here.

On the other hand the second item choreographed by Charrat, *La Biche aux Pieds d'Airain* (with Charrat herself in the title rôle) suffered from the ingenuous outlook characteristic of this choreographer, who is in fact the Peter Pan of ballet: she never seemed to make up her mind whether the title rôle was a woman or a deer, and characterised her so weakly that the climax in which the doe gored the man in love with her was quite unconvincing. As a danseuse Charrat was seen to much better advantage in the rôle of Cerrito in *The Pas de Quatre*; here she danced with vivacity, and was easily the best of the four.

Considerable historical interest attached to a performance of a pas de deux from *Sylvia* by Lycette Darsonal (sometime étoile of the Paris Opéra) and Michel Renault. This had the original choreography by Mérante—quite as appalling and quite as typical of its period as that of Petipa for *La Bayadère*—and the Victorian idiocy of Mérante's choreography was given a special cachet by the addition of a few Lifarian gimmicks, giving the effect of a slab of marzipan floating in a bowl of brown Windsor soup.

Nicolas Chagrin showed a nice flair for clowning in *Masquerade* (arranged by Grace Cone), even if his failure to point his feet was reprehensible.

In the second programme we had very much the mixture as before, though the standard of choreography was on balance somewhat higher. Lycette Darsonal was miscast as Taglioni in the *Pas de Quatre*, and Nina Vyroubova made rather heavy weather of the famous *Nutcracker* pas de deux, but Sonia Arova and Erik Bruhn made their dazzling entry much earlier than before, performing the grand pas de deux from *Flower Festival in Genzano* with great style and éclat, and after the second interval we saw a miniature ballet *L'Emprise* (with choreography by Dick Sanders, and Claire Sombert and Youly Algaroff as interpreters) which shone out like a good deed in a naughty world (in spite of grave defects) because at least the choreographer was trying to say something.

The story, set out in admirable detail in the programme, concerns a hunted man and a demented girl; she recovers her sanity, and the man strangles her to save his life. As treated by Dick Sanders, the story appeared as the wildest melodrama, without a single movement that carried conviction, and the attempts at giving it a cosmic significance ("he leaves her there and moves on elsewhere to fulfil his destiny") were ham-handed. But Claire Sombert has a real flair for this sort of tormented rôle, and at times achieved pathos.

The programme ended with the *Don Quixote* pas de deux, performed in the familiar Petipa choreography by Nina Vyroubova and Juan Giuliano. Here Vyroubova recovered some of her familiar brilliance and danced with a good sense of style.

GREEK DANCE RECITAL

AS THE Revived Greek of Ruby Ginner is in effect an English form of modern dance, it was interesting to see how a modern dance group from Greece would tackle the revival of ancient Greek dances. In fact it soon became clear that Joujou Nicoloudi (artistic director and choreographer of the group which appeared at the Rudolf Steiner Hall on 30th October) had made little serious attempt to use surviving records of ancient Greek dances (vase paintings, statuettes, descriptions, etc.) or of survivals of ancient forms and rhythms in Greek folk-dances of today: most of the show consisted of dances in a very familiar Central European modern-dance idiom which exhausted all its potentialities long ago. (It is characteristic of European exponents of modern dance that they appear unaware of the magnificent creative work done by Martha Graham and others in America in the last three decades.)

But there were two items in which records of ancient Greek dancing were used intelligently, and these were by far the finest in the show. One was *Pan*, which reproduced a few of the gestures made familiar by vase paintings: this was well danced by Sotiris Nomikos, with a remarkable flexibility of the trunk and suppleness of leg movements, particularly in certain characteristic modern-dance movements in which the body is prone on the floor and one leg crosses over in preparation for a rise. (The young danseur gave this familiar movement a disturbing and magical quality which really evoked Pan.) The music, in a modern idiom, was well enough; but far better results would have been achieved with pan-pipes playing melodies of a traditional type, with asymmetrical rhythms derived from modern Greek folk-dances—as was in fact done with great effect in *Tanagra Figurines*. In the latter dance Joujou Nicoloudi revived ancient dances with the crotale (ancestor of the castanet) very skilfully, using authentic costumes and head-dresses and adapting castanet techniques to a reconstruction of the crotale. This beautiful instrument (absurdly described in the programme as a "rattle") was reconstructed in such a way as to produce a fine mellow tone, with different pitches on the two hands (just as with castanets), and it was delightful to watch

Continued foot of next page

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCING GALA

AFTER the reglementary (and somewhat insipid) item performed by the R.A.D. scholars, this year's gala matinée organised by Margot Fonteyn (Drury Lane, 2nd November) got off to a swinging start with the pas de deux from *Flower Festival in Genzano*, performed by two young dancers from the Royal Danish Ballet. This same pas de deux had been performed at Golders Green only a fortnight earlier by Sonia Arova and Erik Bruhn, and it was interesting to compare the various interpretations. Niels Kehlet, though of course lacking the maturity and poise of a great artist like Erik Bruhn, showed excellent promise: his beats were superbly clean, his general style simple and noble, and his elevation magnificent; in fact he went so high in his *doubles tours en l'air* that he had time to add a third turn. The only important weaknesses of this blonde and good-looking artist were a slight stiffness in the arms and a tendency to tense his mouth in fast pirouettes—always difficult for Bournonville-trained dancers: his slow, characteristically Bournonvillean pirouette at the end of his solo was excellent. Solveig Oestergaard—small, slim and very pretty—reminded one of Lucette Aldous; her execution was not quite as polished as that of Sonia Arova, but her interpretation was much more striking; in fact she made the girl's rôle into a pas d'action, teasing her partner when he was on the stage, and in her solo—missing no opportunity for coquettishness—she tended to flirt with the audience.

Rudolf Nureyev made a rather unhappy first appearance in *Poème Tragique*, specially choreographed for him by Frederick Ashton to music by Scriabine chosen by Nureyev. Almost every aspect of this solo was ill-fated. The music with its overstuffed and unrhythmic romanticism was ill-suited to classical dancing; the choreography consisted of the usual "male dancer" steps together with the hackneyed arm gestures (forward and up) which strive to express some desperate anguish of soul but which in fact express nothing at all, and lead every male dancer using them into ham acting; the costume—gaudily painted tights with a nude top-half decorated with red and white bands—was rather chi-chi; and Nureyev's hair, floating over his eyes, suggested an English sheepdog rather than a danseur noble. In fact it was quite impossible to judge his quality in this item.

The first half ended with *Adage*, choreographed by Gerard Ohn to music by Albinoni and performed by Claire Sombert

and Gerard Ohn. This proved to be the sort of slow neo-classical pas de deux (with many lifts) in which the two dancers look slightly stricken with sadness, but bear up rather well. Claire Sombert is very good at looking slightly stricken, and danced with her usual clarity of line; she was expertly partnered by Gerard Ohn, who managed one new and very difficult lift (in which the danseuse was balanced on top of one of his shoulders with no support from either of his hands) with considerable aplomb.

The high point of the matinée was beyond question *Le Spectre de la Rose*, specially rehearsed for the occasion by Tamara Karsavina and performed by Margot Fonteyn and John Gilpin. This used to be in the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, but was never very impressive because the poetry of the original was lacking: Tamara Karsavina, with her familiar and fabulous ability to revive what Fokine himself intended, put back this poetry. Margot Fonteyn acted and danced with an appropriate dreamy languor: she understood that behind the apparent simplicity of Fokine's choreography there is a great deal of refinement and subtlety. Every facial expression and gesture was true and convincing (in contrast to what happened in her earlier item, *Birthday Offering*, in which she had the impossible task of conjuring up ecstasy out of nothing), and she articulated the action perfectly, bringing out each change of mood with the most artistic artlessness; she was particularly good at establishing the magical change when the girl—in the midst of dancing with the Spectre as if he were part of her dream—seems to wake up to some extent and believe that he is really there. (Nothing remotely like this was to be seen in versions of this ballet previously shown by English companies but not rehearsed by Karsavina.)

John Gilpin was well cast as the Spectre, and did justice to Karsavina's instructions about hand movements, giving them something of the languorous, drooping, plastic quality (suggestive of rose petals) that was so characteristic of what Fokine obtained from Nijinsky. But Gilpin's dancing unfortunately showed the same tension that disturbed his dancing during his last months with the Festival Ballet; and he failed to give his interpretation the supple, smooth and effortless quality which was essential, and which one hopes he will achieve when in a more relaxed mood. The fact is that this delightful ballet should be taken back at once into the repertoire of the

Royal Ballet: now that Karsavina has dusted it off and shown it in its pristine beauty, arrangements could easily be made for it to be preserved and performed by a variety of the Royal Ballet's artists. (I can think of several pairs of young dancers who would do it very well.)

In the "Black Swan" pas de deux (performed by Rosella Hightower and Rudolf Nureyev in place of the *Don Quixote* pas de deux announced in the programme) it was possible to get a much better idea of Nureyev's qualities, even though he was hampered by a golden page-boy wig which was quite unsuitable for a male dancer, giving his strange Tartar face an inappropriate feminine cast. It soon became clear that he has a solid, fast pirouette and a broad and high jump which enables him to cover the stage well, as well as the strong back characteristic of all the best Russian dancers of today (both male and female). But there were also some technical defects surprising in a dancer who was until recently one of the leading artists in the Kirov—a company with a number of outstanding male dancers: in particular he turned his head to the right as he prepared for each *double tour en l'air*, and his plié as he landed was not such as to prevent a thump being heard. His acting (in one short interlude) had some of the affectation common in Paris. Quite possibly he was suffering from nervousness at his first appearance in the country which has been the centre of his dreams. At all events it was regrettable that fans insisted on him giving an encore of his solo; for this was inartistic (coming in the middle of a grand pas de deux) showed him to poor advantage (for the repeat was not as good as the first performance), and involved him in the risk of a serious fall when he took the second of a pair of linked *double tour* off balance.

Rosella Hightower performed her share of the pas de deux in a way she has made familiar on a number of previous appearances, with all her usual bravura and in particular a remarkable double turn on pointe with one leg raised in second position.

The programme ended with the pas de six and Tarantella from the finale of *Napoli*, danced by eight young artists of the Royal Danish Ballet. In fact the technical difficulties of the long and arduous pas de six were rather too much for most of the Royal Danes (apart from Solveig Oestergaard and Niels Kehlet); this item really demands six leading soloists. But the Tarantella, with its strong flavour of folk-dancing, went like a bomb.

GREEK DANCE RECITAL—Continued from page 9

how Joujou Nicoloudi herself managed to play it as she danced, making the Tanagra Figurines come to life: unfortunately the leg, arm and body movements (though passing through some ancient positions, and in particular reproducing ancient spinning movements) were very much duller than the crotale rhythms. The dance began as a solo by Miss Nicoloudi, and later developed into a pas de trois, with interesting patterns of contrapuntal rhythms and phrases from the three danseuses.

The only other item of interest was *Wilderness*, choreographed by one of the

danseuses in the group, Rania Papadam. This had the good idea of drawing on bouzouki music of a traditional character and the improvised solo café dances of modern Greece; and there were moments in a pas de deux when some feeling emerged. But this quickly passed, and we were faced with a long, typically "modern-dance" solo in which it was clear that the danseuse was trying to express some sort of anguish but in which the poverty of vocabulary prevented any real expression of feeling.

The performance ended with *Dances*, an

attempt at stylized versions of Greek folk-dances which (like nearly all such attempts by modern dances) was pathetically feeble in comparison with the real thing. What it did do was make one long to see a Greek folk-dance company performing the many and varied authentic versions of folk dances of Greece.

FERNAU HALL

We regret that owing to shortage of space we have been compelled to hold over the reviews of The Royal Ballet season at Covent Garden until the next issue.



INTERVIEW
WITH DAME NINETTE

BBC TELEVISION. MONITOR, SUNDAY, 22nd OCTOBER

THIS edition of *Monitor*, one of the best of all regular television programmes, had as one of its items an impression of Ninette de Valois in action at a camera rehearsal of a coming presentation of *The Rake's Progress*, combined with an interview with Dame Ninette.

Huw Weldon is very commonly infuriating as an interviewer, but this time he excelled himself. Though he had in front of him the choreographer of the ballet to be presented—a ballet which is in fact the finest work of Ninette de Valois—he asked her nothing at all about it. Instead, he asked her questions which simply could not be answered in a meaningful way—for example, what had she to say about being thought ruthless, and when did she realize that she was a formidable person. To make things worse, he made a number of remarks about her achievements which were quite false (for example, he asserted that English ballet was a blank before her, ignoring the pioneer work of the Ballet Club) and so wrapped in confusion the true nature of her achievement.

By far the best thing about this programme was the picture it gave of a producer (Margaret Dale) and a choreographer working together in close collaboration. This ought to be the normal thing whenever dancing is presented on television, but in fact it is very rare.

G.F.

Dame Ninette de Valois rehearsing Elizabeth Anderton (as the Betrayed Girl) and Donald Britton (as the Rake) in *The Rake's Progress*, the first of nine ballets to be given by the Royal Ballet on television under a three-year contract with BBC-TV. Photo by kind permission of BBC.



THE ROYAL BALLET

BBC TELEVISION, THE RAKE'S PROGRESS, MONDAY, 30th OCTOBER

THIS production represented the auspicious beginning of a long series of productions for which the BBC has contracted the Royal Ballet: in fact *The Rake's Progress* is probably better suited to television transmission than any other ballet in the Royal Ballet's repertoire, and from a technical point of view this transmission was the best yet achieved in this field by the BBC. For the latter achievement credit must go to the producer (Margaret Dale), to the choreographer (Ninette de Valois) and above all to their close and harmonious collaboration. There were a few mistakes, such as a persistent cutting off of the feet in scenes where feet mattered, but these bulked very small in the work as a whole.

The camera work was particularly good in the two best scenes—the brothel scene (coily described in the *Radio Times* as "A Tavern") and the final scene in the madhouse: in both scenes the shots made the best out of grotesque movements, the scurrying rhythms, and above all the pithy succinctness of treatment (all of which are in themselves well suited to television); as a result the images surged out of the screen with a vitality extremely rare in televised ballet. There were some excellent diagonals, with one large foreground figure and smaller figures in the background, and these combined with low-angle shots to give a fine nightmare effect exactly in harmony with the choreography and the dramatic development of the ballet. The final solo of the madman, the climax of the ballet, was simply and admirably done, with one

panning and tracking camera and the distance of the dancer from the lens skilfully arranged to vary in such a way as to give mid-shots (from the waist up) when these were choreographically important. (The most difficult problem in all ballet shown on television is the interposition of shots which allow facial expressions to be seen, without breaking the flow of the choreography.)

The whole transmission was dominated (quite properly) by Donald Britton's remarkable performance in the title rôle. He lacked the right elegance in Scene 1, but as soon as the Rake began to degenerate his performance gained vitality, and in fact it went from strength to strength throughout the ballet, culminating in a terrifying mad dance. Donald Britton was greatly helped by repeated changes in make-up, executed or supervised by Anne Ferigi (in charge of make-up for the production); scene by scene his face changed its contours until by the end of the ballet it was a Goya-like mask of madness that was utterly convincing.

The best of the other performances was that of Gerd Larsen as the solo dancer in the brothel scene; she was admirably vulgar and wanton. Elizabeth Anderton danced the part of the Betrayed Girl extremely well, with all her characteristic precision, and her face proved very well suited to the camera; but she did not achieve quite the right quality of pathos. (Possibly she was hampered by the fact that—so far as one could tell—part of her rôle was cut.) The sound engineers deserve

a special word of praise for giving the music (well conducted by John Lanchbery) the appropriate rasping and rowdy quality, and also for picking up all the small incidental noises (such as the sound of the dice rattling in the cup) which have a quite disproportionate impact in television ballet: somehow they convince us that the thing is *really* happening.

G.F.

Excerpts from a letter sent to the Royal Ballet

"Dear my friends,

Four months have passed since you left Japan for home. I have learned English conversation since I met you. It seems that you are old friends of mine, and I want to talk to you and to see your works again. When you left the Tokyo International airport the sorrow of farewell made our eyes wet. Our hearts are always together, even though we live in different countries, England and Japan.

I have enjoyed the pamphlets of your work in Tokyo. I hope that you will have an opportunity to visit my country again. Mizuko Usui. Tokyo."

See also Editor's Log page 4

The Royal Ballet visit to Japan was reported in our June and July 1961 issues.



Jacqueline Rayet as Juliet, Hamburg 1961

Photo : Jürgen Simon

CAREERS IN PICTURES SERIES

TEXT by INGE ZÜRNER

JACQUELINE RAYET

AS A LITTLE girl Jacqueline Rayet loved to go to the cinema, and it was there that she made her first acquaintance with the dance. At the time she did not know the difference between tap dancing, waltzes or classical ballet, but she was attracted by the lightness and grace of the movements, and decided that she, too, wanted to dance. Since she insisted her parents thought it best to take their little daughter to an audition at the Paris Opéra, and so at the age of nine Jacqueline Rayet entered the children's class.

Like so many eager little girls before and since she soon realised that lightness and grace were based on hard, relentless work and discipline, but unlike many others she was not discouraged by this discovery, persevered, gradually climbing the ladder to success, working her way through annual exams right up to the position of première danseuse.

Miss Rayet had her first small, created rôle at the age of 17 in *Blanche Neige* and in time danced a great variety of rôles in the repertoire of the Opéra. Now the hierarchy is very strict there and

it is rare for a première danseuse to be cast in the rôle of an étoile. Rayet has been given such parts on several occasions and therefore the news that on 22nd December, 1960, she had been nominated étoile did not come as a complete surprise.

With this company she has made extensive tours to America and, above all, to Moscow for a four weeks' season. "We took about thirty different ballets to Moscow," she recalled, "and we changed our programme every three or four days. It was hard work, but it was so stimulating. We saw some wonderful performances of the Stanislavsky Ballet and it was most interesting to be shown around the school of the Bolshoi. However, we all regretted very much that we could not see the Bolshoi company since they were in Paris at the time. But I have seen them once," she added, "on their first visit to Paris. It was one of the great experiences of my life. I realised then how much I still had to learn. The next morning I started to work on my ports de bras. I suddenly felt that they were pitifully stiff and inexpressive and I went on



in *Les Sylphides*

Photo : Michel Petit

right : as *Chloe* in *Daphnis et Chloe*
at the Paris Opera 1960



practising for hours every day until I was unable to move neck and shoulders any more."

This perseverance is typical of Jacqueline Rayet, of her capacity for hard work, her desire to learn more and more and to perfect her art. She does not have any one favourite rôle but always devotes her energy and thought to the one she is just preparing, and tries to keep an open mind. She is generally considered to be a fine, lyrical dancer with an effortless technique, a beautifully finished fluent line and eloquent arms. It comes as a bit of a surprise to hear that she would very much like to dance in a modern ballet and that, early in her career, she scored a great success in two rôles as "femme fatale", as the Woman in Red in *Chemin de Lumière* and as Océanide in *Les Noces Fantastiques*. Some of her outstanding rôles at the Opéra were the Queen of the Wilis in *Giselle*, the Girl in *Spectre de la Rose*, the Valse in *Sylphides*, Chloé in *Daphnis et Chloé*, and the various principal parts in works like *Palais de Cristal*, *Suite en Blanc*, *Symphonie* (Gounod, Balanchine) and *Printemps à Vienne*.

Jacqueline Rayet has recently made her official debut as étoile in the rôle of *Giselle** to which she seems especially predestined. Her Albrecht was Peter Van Dijk, with whom she has danced so frequently in recent years, and who has created some beautiful rôles for her in *Peau de Chagrin*, and *Symphonie Inachevée* at the Opéra Comique, and the title parts in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* at the Hamburg State Opera. She also enjoyed dancing there in Balanchine's *Serenade*.

When I asked Miss Rayet her favourite spare time occupations she hesitated for a moment. "Well, you can always put down reading. But then I don't seem to have a lot of spare time. There are always extra classes to take, rôles to be worked out carefully with the help of a teacher or the mirror, and then travelling takes up such a lot of time, too. But whenever I have an evening off I like to go to the theatre to see operas, plays or ballets, I love to watch other dancers. This can give you fresh ideas, and you don't get lost in your own narrow views. This is most important since I do not want to be pinned down to one type of rôle."

Unfortunately our conversation was soon interrupted by the stage manager who wanted Miss Rayet to climb Juliet's balcony so that he might adjust the lighting. I have no doubt that Juliet is one of the rôles that suits her quiet, charming personality particularly well.

INGE ZÜRNER

* Reported by Ferdinand Reyna in our November issue.



Jacqueline Rayet in her first important rôle, in *Passion*.

Photo : Studio Liseg



REVIEW BY

NINA KARASYOVA

at the airport

left to right: Michael Somes, in background Donald Macleary, in foreground (third from left) Nadia Nerina, Galina Ulanova, Frederick Ashton, Dame Ninette de Valois, Olga Lepeshinskaya, Maya Plisetskaya, Yuri Zhdanov, Dame Margot Fonteyn and Leonid Lavrovsky.

curtain calls

left: Ondine. left to right: Michael Somes, Margot Fonteyn, Frederick Ashton, Julia Farron and Alexander Grant.

below: La Fille Mal Gardée.

left to right: Stanley Holden, David Blair, Nadia Nerina, Alexander Grant and Leslie Edwards

THE ROYAL BAL

The Première

THE Royal Ballet's first performance in Moscow was the ballet *Ondine*, with Margot Fonteyn in the title rôle. The English première danseuse created a beautifully poetic image of the daughter of the sea. Her original dances, translucent and rippling, conveyed the finest emotional nuances. *Ondine*, as danced by the touching, unique Margot, remained the centre of attention throughout. Her Soviet audiences did not fail to note Frederick Ashton's interesting, highly lyrical choreography for her dances. His work differed from the customary academic manner in the pattern of the poses, the complex supports and unusual duets, the pyramidal compositions, and the diversity of choreographic design all bespeaking the choreographer's impeccable taste and ingenuity. Applying himself to a wide range of choreographical means, he was able to give utmost expression to the message contained in the old romantic legend of love and death, that theme so beloved by him. He found the right colours for the image of Tirrenio (brilliantly performed by the phenomenal character dancer Alexander Grant) and for the brave knight Palemon (excellently performed by Michael Somes).

The Soviet critics remarked the typically English style of the production, and credited the Royal Ballet with having created its own unique choreography and school of performance.

... The last strains of the orchestra, which, under the masterful baton of John Lanchbery, had given a splendid rendition of the difficult score of Werner Henze's music, were drowned in a thunder of applause. The audience expressed their high admiration and gratitude to the dancers with offerings of bouquets.

To my mind, there were just a few regrettable points about the production that are easily corrected. In the first place, I found Henze's music very cold and undramatic, lending little to the production's dynamic quality. Though interesting in parts, it was not altogether accessible to the audience's ear. Even the brilliant John Lanchbery was unable to breathe any life into the score. I also thought a jarring note was produced by the somewhat music-hallish character of the mass dance in Act II. And, interesting as it was in itself, the divertissement in Act III did not quite fit into the ballet.

Nadia Nerina's Triumph in "La Fille Mal Gardée"

La Fille Mal Gardée with Nadia Nerina in the main rôle was a triumph far beyond the expectations of the company. It was accompanied by continuous bursts of applause and approval. Whereas *Ondine* merited the appreciation of specialists in the main, this ballet stirred the hearts of the audience as a whole. The melodious score of Hérold's music and Frederick Ashton's clever and stimulating choreography, contrasting as it did a genuinely English performance against the French music, both contributed to the production's success.

Especially gratifying was Nadia Nerina's performance of Lise. Possessing perfect technique, the ballerina gave a natural and

touchingly human image of the peasant girl. She had a worthy partner in the splendid young dancer David Blair (Colas), and excellent support in Alexander Grant (Alain) and another fine character dancer, Stanley Holden (Simone).

"It was an interesting, stimulating and buoyant performance, and afforded us genuine pleasure," said the Moscow spectators.

One-Act Ballets

The audience's interest was aroused by the company's two programmes of one-act ballets. Of late the Soviet ballet companies have also been staging one-act ballets, especially popular among which are *Francesca da Rimini* (Tchaikovsky) and *Paganini* (Rachmaninov). It is interesting to note that V. Ryndin's decor for the latter ballet was exhibited at the Royal Festival Hall in London during the "Modern Soviet Ballet Designers" show held there.

The British artists presented several ballets, including *Les Patineurs*, *La Péri*, *Danses Concertantes*, *Rake's Progress* and *Rinaldo and Armida*.

Les Patineurs, *Rake's Progress* and *Danses Concertantes* met with the most success.





We regret that this report from Moscow has been delayed due to circumstances beyond our control. We publish it at this late date at the request of readers who have kindly written in encouraging us to do so.

IN MOSCOW

Les Patineurs, that buoyant choreographic scene to Meyerbeer's lovely music, as choreographed by Frederick Ashton and costume-designed by William Chappell, made a very favourable impression upon me. Everybody liked the performers. The most applause went to Brian Shaw, Maryon Lane, Annette Page, Anya Linden and Donald Macleary. I attended this ballet twice and both times witnessed the audience's enthusiastic reception.

In *Rake's Progress* everything was excellent: G. Gordon's music, Ninette de Valois' choreography translating Hogarth's delightful engravings into the form of the dance with such refined taste and feeling, and the performers themselves. R. Whistler's decor provided a splendid setting for the production.

After Macmillan's interesting *Danses Concertantes* to Stravinsky's music, Moscow audiences were anxious to see *The Firebird*. Many of us had never seen this work of Fokine's. However, what we saw disappointed us. Though Stravinsky's music has lost none of its freshness and vigour, the production itself is outmoded and viewed as an archaism which its few interesting choreographic finds fail to relieve. Moreover, Nadia Nerina did not seem the right type for the *Firebird*.

The *Lady and the Fool* was enlivened by the two clowns as

performed by Ronald Hynd and Ray Powell. Svetlana Beriosova, endowed as she is with a majestic stance and equipped with the excellent academic technique of the Russian classical school, made a very fine showing as a lady of fashion. She is perhaps better in this ballet than in any of the others I saw. I found her less interesting, for instance, in *Rinaldo* and *Armida*, where Julia Farron was at better advantage in her dynamic rôle of Sybil.

The performances of the Royal Ballet were all well received and proved of mutual benefit to both guest performers and hosts. However, it is a pity that a creative exchange of opinions was not held between the English and Soviet ballet dancers, due to the latter's absence (some were on tour and others on holiday). We hope that this will not be the Royal Ballet Company's last appearance in Moscow, but only the first of many more, during which an exchange of opinions can be held to the benefit of both parties.

Moscow Press Comments on the Performances of the Royal Ballet Company

People's Artist of the RSFSR Asaf Messerer entitled his article in the *Izvestia*, "Mature Youth."

"The English artists," he wrote, "are in excellent professional form, a form that is acquired by much work, and work is the pledge of future successes."

People's Artist of the RSFSR Mikhail Gabovich wrote in his article, "The Art of the British Ballet," in the *Sovetskaya Kultura* that "The classics as a school and style have been tackled seriously by the Royal Ballet. . . . The British ballet showed itself to be a mature artistic organisation, throughout which a thoughtful, attentive approach to the image in the dance runs like a red vein. Artistic, scenic expressiveness, concern for the inner content of the rôle, and artistic finish of the parts are a great creative achievement, approaching our understanding of art."

N. Elyash, the well-known ballet critic and historian, published two articles. One, entitled "Poetry Incarnate," was printed in the *Sovetskaya Kultura* and the other, "Humaneness and Romanticism" appeared in the *Literatura i Zhizn*. In both articles, N. Elyash noted the "impeccable taste, fine culture and original style of the young national choreographic theatre of England." He wrote that "the combination of lofty noble romanticism with tragedy and comedy is a characteristic feature of English choreographic art."

In her article, "Traditions and Quests," printed in the *Moskovskaya Pravda*, ballet master N. Sheremetievskaya noted "the mastery of the company as a whole, the unity of its style of performance and the vivid individuality of the artists." "Characteristic of Margot Fonteyn's art," she wrote, "is musicality, lyricism, a fine feeling of style, and beauty of dance form. Nadia Nerina captivates us as Lise in *La Fille Mal Gardée*, which can be named the most interesting of the theatre's productions. The ballet is distinguished by excellent composition and active choreography enriched by the elements of the folk dance. The cast is brilliantly selected."



THE PAS DE QUATRE—Continued

first bounded with that vigour of muscle unparalleled, which characterises her spécialité. Then came Carlotta Grisi with that never-failing youthful, winning grace, which so singularly distinguishes her, and which makes one forget for the time that her steps are the studied result of art. As to Lucile Grahn, she assumed at once her place as a ballerina unsurpassed, and to borrow a comparison from Aristophanes, she revolved with such lightness that she appeared rather a spirit than a body. Need we say how this extraordinary scene terminated amidst the cheers, hurrahs, and wild applause of the audience, which was violently renewed when the curtain fell; and then appeared once more the immortal four, amidst such a rain of bouquets as never fell but in fairyland."

THE SPECTATOR

the week ending 19th July, 1845

"The lovers of dancing have had their heads turned by a *pas de quatre* in which Taglioni, Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucile Grahn have vied with each other in 'tours de force.' The floating buoyancy of Cerrito's bounds, the vigorous neatness of Grisi's execution, and the mechanical facility of Grahn, were each in turn eclipsed by the transcendent grace of Taglioni. It has been a ravishing display of choreographic art, and tonight is the last time it can be witnessed, for Carlotta Grisi takes her departure from the Italian Opera."

THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

20th July, 1845

"The great feature of the entertainments of the week has been the extraordinary concentration of talent in *The Pas de Quatre*, as the habitués of the opera term it. To see Taglioni, Cerrito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucile Grahn in the same dance is certainly such a gratification as no one could have imagined. It embraces the whole talent of Europe, and no theatre but an establishment with such immense resources as this could have managed it. Perrot, who has composed the dance for the occasion, has displayed great ability; the peculiar talent of each dancer has been studied, and it exhibits them to the best advantage, whilst they form a harmonious combination that is exceedingly pleasing. It is certainly the most interesting dance that has ever been witnessed within the walls of this theatre, and the grace and excellence will ever be matchless; the enthusiastic applause with which it is received shows that it is fully appreciated by the audience, who are boundless in their ecstasies."

There is a most interesting account of *The Pas de Quatre* in the book "My Contemporaries" 1830-1870 by William Archer-Shee. He writes, among many other amusing anecdotes of that period, of what was undoubtedly the theatrical sensation of the season:—

"Who was it advertised for a new excitement? I am like the old lady who, being asked after her husband, replied that he was in the 'arms of Beelzebub,'—but corrected herself, saying, "I mean 'Abraham's bosom,'" but I never can recollect people's names."

I can never recollect people's names, but, whoever the individual was who lived a 'long time ago' had lived in the present day, he would have exclaimed 'Eureka.' Talk of excitement—gracious goodness—let those who need it go to the Haymarket, and see the 'Pas de Quatre.'

Continued on page 19

SAN FRANCISCO

by JACK ANDERSON

FIVE of the seven ballets presented on Pacific Ballet's programmes of 19th and 20th October were new works by Marc Wilde. While laudable as an indication of the value the company places upon its resident choreographer, the performances nevertheless revealed that such a rapid succession of premières strained both choreographer and dancers.

Two of the new works were insignificant trifles: *Josette* (Jolivet), a Parisian romance, and a *pas de deux* to Leonard Bernstein music. In the abstract *Grazioso* Wilde not only risked staging a ballet to Mozart's 40th Symphony (rushing in where even Balanchine has feared to tread), but invited added censure by rearranging the order of the movements, a piece of tampering the pedestrian choreography never justified. The ungracious *Grazioso*, in sum, was Wilde's weakest ballet of the past three years.

Fortunately, two other works had considerable merit. *Tetrameron* (Russell Smith), for masked and unmasked dancers, could be viewed in several ways: as an abstraction completely satisfying in its spatial relationships, as a commentary upon one's private and public selves, and as a depiction of a struggle between individuality and mass conformity.

Most ambitious of all was *Orpheus*. Using percussion music of various composers, the choreography sought to evoke archaic Greece with results which were sometimes compelling, sometimes faintly dated in an *Afternoon of a Faun* manner. Throughout, one had the impression that Wilde placed a special interpretation of his own upon the myth. But tantalizing details never resolved into a coherent whole.

For example, after a struggle with Pluto, Orpheus regains Eurydice, but loses his lyre. Why? Again, why did the choreographer violate his own style by making the Furies resemble most un-archaic harlots? At the beginning of the ballet, Orpheus shows his strength by moving a pillar; at the conclusion, he is crushed beneath pillars. Why this suggestion of *Samson Agonistes*? The ballet is well worth careful revision, for much of it is very good and the rest deserves to be better.

The moral of the Pacific Ballet performances would seem to be: Marc Wilde should certainly be permitted to stage five new ballets—but not all five at once.

The Contemporary Dancers' recent programme contained three new works by J. Marks, of which by far the best was *Judith* (Bloch). Strangely enough, this ballet, which also employed recitation, was more effective in its pauses than in its movement. The slow, deliberate pace and Marks' astute use of setting and lighting resulted in impressive tableaux of sculptural beauty. At all times, the work possessed dignity—a real accomplishment for, improperly handled, this Apocryphal tale could seem cheaply sensational.

On the same programme were *Concerto Exotique* (Braga), which innocuously combined several ethnic styles, and *Harry Was a Hero But He Died*, a heavy-handed satire on middle class standards set to a variety of sound effects.

Dance took on an international flavour at the University of California with performances, within a single week, by Roberto Iglesias, Indrani, and the Aviv Dance Theatre.

NEWS FROM PARIS by FERDINAND REYNA

MAYA PLISETSKAYA and her partner Nicolai Fadeychev, stars of the Bolshoi Ballet of Moscow, danced in Bourmeister's version of *Swan Lake* at the Paris Opéra on 27th September and the 4th and 6th October.

Plisetskaya is of Armenian origin, being the niece of Asaf and Shulamith Messerer, well-known Soviet ballet-masters; up to now she has been known in Paris only from films—*The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and *Swan Lake* in the Gorsky-Messerer version.

Plisetskaya made an enormous impression on the Opéra audience. Though there were differences of opinion about her, she had a real triumph. Connoisseurs of technique were shocked by a certain awkwardness which afflicted her movements at times—e.g. in a series of grands jétés around the stage which she ended prematurely. In spite of her very strong technique (showing itself in steel-like pointes, blinding speed and a remarkable turn-out) she does not permit herself any spectacular tours de force. Her long arms are miraculous wings, supple and expressive. Very few ballerinas in the world can give their arm and hand movements such poetry, tenderness and mystery: even when Plisetskaya is taking a bow she adds to the traditional *révérence* new arm movements which she seems to create on the spur of the moment.

In Act II Plisetskaya is the embodiment

of lunar and amorous poetry, while in Act III, in the black tutu of the sorceress Odile, this great artist shows a fiery, disturbing and passionate temperament. The boldness of her attack, the spirited quality of her acting, her beauty and her artistry make her evil seductiveness irresistible. Here is a great artist who does not need to use any tricks to make her effects.

Her partner Nicolai Fadeychev is no longer as slender as when he appeared in *Swan Lake* at the Opéra in 1958, but remains a great danseur noble with a pure classical style; he is supple, with a very soft leap, and is both virile and distinguished. He shared (quite deservedly) in the success of his famous partner.

Immediately after the first performance the company of the Opéra (in the absence of A. M. Julien, who was in Tokyo) received the two artists in the Foyer de la Danse, where flowers were presented to them. The Ballet Club of Paris also gave them a reception, attended by the Soviet Ambassador.

During her stay in Paris Maya Plisetskaya was the guest of the well-known French writer Louis Aragon and his wife Elsa Triolet: the latter is Russian, and her sister (who lives in the U.S.S.R.) is one of the best friends of the ballerina.

Plisetskaya went out seldom, but she did go to the cinema to see *Spartacus* and also to the Folies Bergères, where she was recognized and given flowers by the girls.

What's NEW

Sonia Roberts shopping guide

BALLERINA CLOCK

The dancing ballerina whose perpetual pirouette marks the passing of each second is a feature of one of the latest Swiss Clocks from the famous house of Staiger. Priced at £4.17.6, the cream finished clock has the dial at one end, a small window, rather resembling a television screen at the other, through which can be glimpsed the dancing doll. From all good departmental store clock sections.

COCKTAIL TRAY

For serving drinks, there is the Clover TR2 cocktail tray decorated with prints of historic dance costumes from the Plantagenet to the Edwardian eras. The picture panels are mounted on a black background and the tray measuring 15½ in. x 11 in. costs 26s. There is also a round tray (no. TR3 with prints of dancers in national costumes from six different countries, again on a black ground measuring 12 in. and priced at 19s. 11d.

CRYSTAL SWANS

Many famous dancers, including Beryl Grey, and their admirers, like to make collections of swans sculptured or moulded from different materials. Anyone with this hobby will be delighted by the latest range of Whitefriars Crystal, a series of modern, almost abstract swans in glass, which can be used as small bon-bon containers or just to look at. They come in smoky, blue, grey and green as well as clear glass. The small six inch swan sells at 14s. 3d., the larger 8 in. at £1.0.3 and the biggest standing 10 in. costs 36s.

TABLE MATS

The latest range of heat resistant mats by Clover Leaf (Products) Ltd. are a good idea for a dinner party with a difference—(ask to see the Clovercraft range at your local fancy goods store or department). The background of each is a light wood grain effect, each mat costs 2s. 3d.

Alternatively as a gift the Super Nine set shown in our photograph is ideal. This consists of nine mats with ballet motifs on pale grey backgrounds. In a charming fancy box the set costs 32s. 6d.

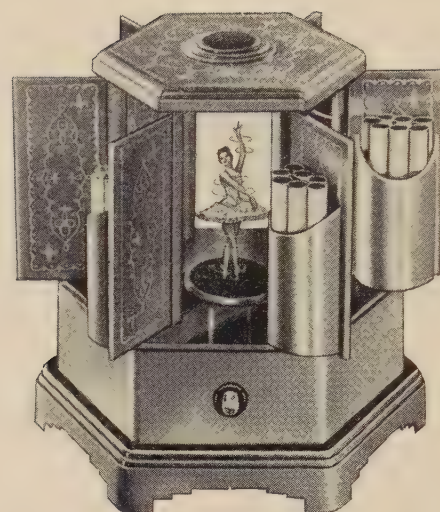


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WRAPPING YOUR GIFTS

If *Patineurs* is your favourite ballet then you should see that all your presents are wrapped in Sanderson's new paper no. W 263 which carries a fully colour motif of dancer/skaters on black ground. Blue and green versions are obtainable too and the paper sells at around 6d. per sheet.



CIGARETTE DISPENSER

There is now a musical cigarette dispenser on the market called "The Ballerina Roundelay". At the touch of a button six revolving doors slowly open to the strains of *The Blue Danube* revealing a twirling dancing ballerina, and six pockets for cigarettes. The ballerina remains on view long enough for a cigarette to be selected, and the doors then close automatically to the melody. The musical box has a genuine long-play Swiss movement, is moulded in black or ivory plastic with gold intagliated design and retails at £3.17.6 (subject to P.T. amendments). Made by Selcol Products Ltd. and obtainable from most first-class tobacconists.

BALLET CURTAINING

Are you thinking beyond Christmas towards a re-furbishing of your room? Curtains which proclaim your love of ballet can be up in the Warner & Sons Ltd. fabric entitled "Ballet". This cloth designed by Cheney Greeff shows a swathe of dancers inspired by the ballet *Les Sylphides* boldly drawn in black on a choice of blue, soft mustardy yellow or dusty pink backgrounds. The fabric itself is 48 in.-50 in. cotton and costs 13s. 9d. per yard.

Alternatively in the Sanderson range of fabrics there is a Fede Cheti design, based on Toulouse Lautrec famous studies entitled "Moulin Rouge" which shows can-can dancers in full colour against a white ground. It is rather expensive at 75s. 9d. per yard but a truly impressive and original piece of designing (ask for no. TP 3364/1).



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PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

FESTIVAL BALLET AT ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, LONDON THE NUTCRACKER

26th Dec. - 13th Jan. daily (except Sundays) 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

25th Nov.	Sat.	(mat at 2.15 p.m.)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Park, Macleary)
25th "	Sat.	(eve)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Nerina, Blair)
27th "	Mon.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Fonteyn, Blair)
1st Dec.	Fri.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Fonteyn, Blair)
2nd "	Sat.	(mat at 2.00 p.m.)	<i>Ondine</i> (Beriosova, Macleary)
7th "	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> (Gilpin), <i>Petrushka</i> , <i>Les Patineurs</i> (Gilpin)
9th "	Sat.	(mat at 2.15 p.m.)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Park, Rosson)
9th "	Sat.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Fonteyn, Blair)
12th "	Tues.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> (Gilpin), <i>Persephone</i> (first performance), <i>Jabez and the Devil</i>
13th "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> , <i>Persephone</i> , <i>Jabez and the Devil</i>
15th "	Fri.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> , <i>Persephone</i> , <i>Jabez and the Devil</i>
16th "	Sat.	(mat at 2.15 p.m.)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Nerina, Blair)
18th "	Mon.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Fonteyn, Blair)
20th "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Nerina, Blair)
21st "	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> , <i>Persephone</i> , <i>Diversions</i>
27th "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Sibley, Rosson)
28th "	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> , <i>Persephone</i> , <i>Diversions</i>
30th "	Sat.	(mat at 2.15 p.m.)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Park, Rosson)
30th "	Sat.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Page, Hynd)
1st Jan.	Mon.	(eve)	<i>Les Sylphides</i> , <i>Persephone</i> , <i>Diversions</i>
3rd "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Linden, Macleary)
5th "	Fri.	(eve)	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> (Nerina, Blair)
6th "	Sat.	(mat at 2.00 p.m.)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Park, Macleary)
9th "	Tues.	(eve)	<i>Cinderella</i> (Fonteyn, Blair)
13th "	Sat.	(mat at 2.15 p.m.)	<i>Cinderella</i> (Linden, Macleary)
13th "	Sat.	(eve)	<i>Cinderella</i> (Nerina, Ashbridge)

INESITA

- Nov. 28 Lecture recital at the Gustav Holst Hall Morley College, London, at 6.30 p.m.
Dec. 1 Full evening's performance with a small group of musicians at the Emma Cons Hall Morley College 8 p.m.

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

- w/c 27th Nov. Theatre Royal, Nottingham
" 4th Dec. Streatham Hill Theatre,
" 11th " Golders Green

THE ROYAL BALLET ON TOUR

- w/c 27th Nov. Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool

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"Nothing can exceed the enthusiasm of the British public, and well they may applaud, for not only is the idea a grand one, but it has been well carried out. Even Charlie P-----, the finest of the fine, is seen to tap his spotless gloves together, an effort he never makes, he says, but 'leaves such manifestations to the public.'"

Next month Mr. Dolin continues the history of *The Pas de Quatre* from 1847 onwards.

RECORD GUIDE

Gaité Parisienne

The serious and the gay sides of Christmas both have their place, and it is the welding of these two proportionately that brings the greatest happiness. I think that to suggest Offenbach, on the lighter side, should meet with most readers' approval and what better than Massine's ballet, *Gaité Parisienne*, with music from the composer's delicious operettas. Georg Solti, our new Musical Director at Covent Garden, conducts the Royal Opera House Orchestra on Decca SXL2280 in a well considered performance. Maybe you could feel that he is not quite lighthearted enough? Well, yes, that is a point but nevertheless you will enjoy it, as well as the excellently performed ballet music from Gounod's *Faust* which he includes (mono LXT5642).

Beecham in Rehearsal

This is a record, HMV. ALP1874 (mono only), that many of us, who have heard and seen Sir Thomas Beecham, will buy as a memento of a great man. Apparently he was unaware of what was happening at certain rehearsals of Haydn's *Military*, *Clock* and *London Symphonies*, which take up the first side, and we hear him having his joke with his orchestra, who obviously love it, his coaxing and his driving in order to get exactly what he wanted. The second side is of his recording of Mozart's opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and gives one a better idea of his tactics. Of course an unrehearsed rehearsal has its limitations but this record will have a most secure place in my collection.

Les Noces

By the time Stravinsky wrote the music for *Les Noces*, which Diaghilev commissioned and then produced in Paris on 13th June 1923, he had passed completely from his early period of the *Firebird* and *Petrouchka*—his two ballets that I must admit I find the most enjoyable. He approaches the Russian folk marriage through the basic elements and uses as his instrument four solo voices, chorus, four pianos and percussion. This combination suggests toughness and Ansermet, on Decca SXL2277, allows a suspicion of his lyrical tendency to creep in. Nevertheless, it is, together with that of the *Symphony of Psalms* on the reverse side, a performance to be reckoned with, and both are very finely recorded (mono LXT5639).

Black Tights

Unfortunately I missed Roland Petit's film at the Coliseum, so at the moment of writing I cannot comment. However, Pyc have issued a recording, CCL30171 mono, taken from the sound track, with an introduction by Maurice Chevalier to each of the four ballets, *Carmen*, *The Diamond Cruncher*, *A Merry Morning* and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Marius Constant, conducting the Lamoureux Concerts Orchestra, is competent, if not exactly exciting, and the recording is good. I feel, therefore, that this should be a satisfactory reminder to ballet and film goers of their evening with Moira Shearer, Cyd Charisse and Zizi Jeanmaire.

Continued on page 22

SERGE LIDO'S NEW BOOK

Ballet Panorama by Serge Lido. A. & C. Black 63/-

Serge Lido did not publish his annual book of ballet photographs last year, the first break in continuity, but the latest volume published in October has been well worth the time we have had to wait for it. There are 128 pages of glorious photographs, of interest to ballet lovers throughout the world, taken by this maestro of the camera. The book is beautifully produced and one turns to the last page with a sigh of regret that we have to wait at least another year until the next edition is ready.

Jerome Robbins, George Skibine and Maurice Béjart preface the volume of photographs, the commentary and text are by Irene Lidova. I wish I could speak or write Madame Lido's language as well as she does mine, but I must point out that there are still mistakes to be found in the English spelling and captions. Nevertheless, even if it means mortgaging your pocket money, rush out and buy this book. You won't be sorry. E.H.

AS WE GO TO PRESS

Germany

Madame Yvonne Georgi is producing the Hanover Opera Ballet in the first full length *Giselle* in Germany. Trudy Goth, our roving correspondent, has sent in a report, too late for this issue, on the opening of the new West Berlin Opera House, resident choreographer Tatiana Gsovsky, guest choreographer Deryk Mendel. The report with pictures will be published next issue. The State Theatre of Hesse, Wiesbaden will have a ballet evening on 2nd December. Imre Keres will be responsible for choreography and production. Programme Mozart *Serenade in G*, Bela Bartok *The Miraculous Mandarin*, Francois Poulenc *Promenade*.

London

Anton Dolin had to cancel his lecture tour of the U.S.A. (under the auspices of impresario Sol Hurok) on the advice of his doctor. Mr. Dolin has been resting for three weeks and we are happy to say has now completely recovered.

Careers in Pictures Series still available

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Dear Editor

Stories of the Ballet

I take *Ballet Today* regularly. But if I can find a ballet magazine which includes an outline of the story at the beginning of its critical articles, I shall take that one instead.

There must be many people like myself who have not seen all the ballets in the repertoire of the various companies, and when reading about them are at loss to understand them clearly.

I do not know why it is assumed that everyone is familiar with the stories. It is most frustrating but I may say that I still have only the vaguest idea what *The Rite of Spring* is about. I have read critical reviews on it, I have heard a dancer say on radio how wonderful it is to dance. But what is it about?

I do hope you will consider including, even a brief story outline, at some future date.

(Miss) Louise Emslie
Borough Green, Kent

Fernau Hall writes:

Miss Emslie has a very good point: it is all too easy to assume that the reader has also seen the ballet under review. I do take care to write about the story of the ballet whenever it is relevant, but I am glad to note Miss Emslie's very reasonable complaint—though I hope she will not expect to be given details of the stories of *Swan Lake*, *Giselle* and *Coppélia*.

The Editor writes:

We try, within the limitations of space at our command, to give the outline of the story of new ballets, for instance April 1961 *Les Deux Pigeons*, May 1961 *The Stone Flower*, September 1961 *The Snow Maiden*, all very generously illustrated in pictures, but it is a good thing to point out our shortcomings, we are inclined to live too much on top of the job and consequently assume readers have seen the ballet by the time we go to press.

EDITOR'S LOG—

Continued from page 4

Why was it then that I left that hall with my spirits high and a warm glow in my heart for all the artists concerned? I have seen the best that London has to offer, many famous dancers and companies, I have become a little blasé. I know the answer, it was because I had witnessed stage by stage the growing enthusiasm of that audience as item succeeded item.

"It was only by some miracle" John Gregory had continued in his letter "that the show gets on at all". It always is on these one-night stands, but I had witnessed an even greater miracle. I had seen this small Company take a motley audience from a dead cold start, warm them at their own shrine, and convince them that ballet has a great deal to offer.

It is a good thing for ballet that people like Barbara Vernon and John Gregory always remember that audiences have to be wooed to be won, and think the work and worry worthwhile to achieve this object.

La and Les Sylphide

Seeing Mr. D. K. Cameron's mention of ballet-goers' confusion between Fokine and Taglioni in their respective *Sylphides* (Bournonville adding his version four years after the latter), I am inclined to think that the relationship between "La" and "Les" *Sylphides* is so close that any confusion between them is completely excusable and reasonable.

In illustrating this I quote extracts from (a) G. B. L. Wilson's *Dictionary of Ballet* and (b) an article by Mary Clarke in *World Ballet*.

(a) "The first performance of *Chopiniana* in the form subsequently re-named, by Diaghilev, *Les Sylphides* (probably to recall *La Sylphide*) was given at a charity performance at the Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg on 8th March 1908. On 7th February 1907 Fokine had presented a ballet *Chopiniana* at a charity performance. This was set to a suite of Chopin pieces of that name, orchestrated by Glazounov, and was a series of scenes in national costumes." (Mr. Cameron's neighbour's *stylised kilt costume* is not, therefore, so out of place after all). "One of these scenes was a *pas de deux* to the *valse*, danced by Oboukhoff and Pavlova, who wore a long white tutu of *La Sylphide*. From this dance came the conception the following year of *Chopiniana* as a *ballet blanc*."

(b) "Taglioni's legacy to the dance is considerable and a gesture of homage is paid to her with every performance of Fokine's ballet *Les Sylphides*, in which all the female dancers are clad in long white ballet skirts, in memory of the first Sylphide, Marie Taglioni."

Kathryn Balchin
Cape Province, South Africa

D. K. Cameron writes:

I am glad my comment has elicited this interesting note from Miss Balchin on the link between *La Sylphide* and *Les Sylphides*. *Chopiniana* was Fokine's first

gesture of revolt against the stultifying conventions of the Imperial Ballet and, as such, was inspired by the earlier ballet, which performed a similar function in its time. They both set aesthetics and expression against what had become mere technical gimmickry.

I agree that confusion is understandable on the basis of superficial knowledge, but would it not be better for the ballet-goer in question to know the *fact* that these are two different works—if only for his own protection and self-esteem? All balletomanes are not so charitable as our fair correspondent.

No slacking

Amongst other ballets scheduled for London Ballet's next tour will be one by American choreographer Loyd Tygett. I wrote asking him about the score (by Don Gillis), whether it could be reset for us; and the size of the orchestra needed. Tygett replied:

"I know the percussionist will be kept busy with bongos, cowbells, chimes, shots, etc. With Ruth Page's company the percussion section (one man) takes up about half the pit space. He plays any and everything that can be hit . . . including the floor. He is always falling off his stool."

Walter Gore
London

Views expressed by contributors are their own and not necessarily the same as those held by the Editor.

Letters to the Editor must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope if a reply is required.

If you do not wish your letter to appear in print please mark clearly "Not for Publication".

We cannot accept articles or photographs for autograph.

News from here and there

Occupational hazard

Arriving in Wolverhampton for their next tour date in October, all the members of Ballet Rambert, including principals, corps de ballet and members of the orchestra were advised to have an anti-polio inoculation in view of the polio outbreak in Hull where they had been playing at the New Theatre the previous week. This inoculation was the first of three, the second and third would have to be administered at successive stages on the tour.

New Ballet Club

The St. Albans College of Further Education have recently founded a Ballet Club, with Mr. Cyril Swinson as Chairman. There is a brochure available listing events to Christmas 1961, and plans for January 1962 onwards. Enquiries to: St. Albans College of Further Education, Department of Adult Education, 29 Hatfield Road, St. Albans.

Paris

Yvette Chauviré has just been engaged by the Cuevas company; with Serge Golovine as partner, she will dance the title rôle in *The Sleeping Beauty* in the forthcoming tour of the Middle East and America.

Festival Ballet news

Janet Kedge has announced her engagement to Freddie Dalgety, P.R.O. to the Company. Mr. Dalgety and Louis Godfrey are directing a film choreographed by the latter for Southern Television. Sheila Melvin, from Enfield, and Carol Yule from Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, have been made Company soloists. Alicia Markova has been dancing *The Swan* with the Company on Mondays during the current tour, and has played to packed houses. *Snow Maiden* has packed them in in the provinces as it did in London.

NEW BOOKS ON THE BALLET

reviewed by

JANET SINCLAIR (Mrs. Leo Kersley)

well-known critic and author

LEO KERSLEY

premier danseur Sadler's Wells 1946-50 and now the

Director of his own ballet school in Harlow, Essex.

Ballet: A Swift Picture Book. Photos and text by Houston Rogers. Longacre Press Ltd., 7/6d.

This book is nicely produced, the photographs are attractive, and—wonder of wonders—there does not seem to be a single mistake in the text, save for the Bloomer of All Time: "Stravinsky and Benois created the colourful ballet *Petrushka* for the great Diaghilev." Poor Fokine! (And in case anyone doesn't know, it is Nadia Nerina on the cover.)

This book will make a very attractive present for any child interested in ballet, and the stories of the ballets are written in sensible, good English which will not embarrass any parent roped in to read aloud. J.S.

More Ballet Stories for Young People by Gladys Davidson. Cassell, 13/6d.

Since I see that Miss Davidson has published over eighteen books, I need feel no qualms on her behalf—she is obviously no struggling young author—when I say that the present one is inaccurate, incomplete, crammed with misinformation and written in an embarrassing "for-the-little-ones" style. We read that Fokine produced *L'Epreuve d'Amour* for Diaghilev: that *Gala Performance* was created by Ballet Rambert; that *Bar aux Folies-Bergère* is now in the repertoire of the Royal Ballet: the date for *Hazana* is given differently on two successive pages, *Schéhrazade* was first danced by Karsavina and *The Witch Boy* was first performed by "the Ballet der Lage at Landen" (in fact, the Ballet der Lage Landen in Amsterdam). This is but a small sample of elementary facts misquoted by Miss Davidson, and the style in which she treats her subject can best be illustrated by the following quotation from her account of the story of Carter's *The Witch Boy*.

"But, as the Conjurman had not the power likewise to restore the beautiful human Barbara Allen he had loved so well, the newly created Witch Boy was heard to utter a terrible cry of woe, as he now rushed forth into the night towards the mountains to which he belonged. He was followed more slowly by his creator, the blind and shuffling Conjurman.

"And nobody had any desire to follow this supernatural pair!"

Inaccuracy, while always deplorable, can be forgiven in a book for adults, since most of us have become sceptical with age and believe nothing without checking: but to produce a book for children, who take the printed word for gospel, packed with care-

less inaccuracy is entirely shameful. To read Miss Davidson explaining the plots of *The Rake's Progress* and *Schéhrazade* to the little ones makes one regret that she apparently balked at *The Invitation*. This book may have a laudable object, but the results are wholly deplorable. L.K.



The Kirov Ballet:

"Coppelia":

"The Nutcracker":

"Les Sylphides":

"Giselle":

"Swan Lake":

"Sleeping Beauty".

Text by George Hall.

Ballet Books, each 2/6d.

These little books are of such a handsome appearance, the quality of the reproductions and the photographs themselves are so admirable (apart from the atrocity perpetrated on page 10 of "Sleeping Beauty") that at half-a-crown they are of unparalleled value at the present time. Considerable trouble has obviously been taken by Mr. Hall in assembling his material and one cannot but admire his energy and enthusiasm, though it is a pity that he did not ask somebody to check his proofs and thereby eliminate frequent misspellings of names and occasional wrong captioning.



I must also in passing cavil at the statement, apropos Baronova, that she was "made a ballerina by Balanchine in 1932", and at the personal opinion presented as fact, on page 12 of *Swan Lake* ("The interpretation of these two is excelled by no other dancers.") Apart from these small details, these booklets should solve the problem for many at Christmas in cases when a Christmas card is insufficient.

Covent Garden Books 13. Published by the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Edited by William Beresford. 5/-.

This pictorial record of the Royal Ballet covers the ground from 26th March 1957 to 4th April 1961, and it is well worth the money, both as a picture-book and as a check list of the company's productions during that period.

However, since so much time and care has been spent on this souvenir, it is a pity that the Editor did not make the records quite comprehensive. For example, under the heading *The Sleeping Beauty* we find the dates of the original Leningrad production, the production at Sadler's Wells Theatre and the Covent Garden performance in 1947. Perhaps it is mere cavilling to wish for the inclusion of Diaghilev's production; but in view of the foregoing, is it not a little bald, under *Le Baiser de la Fée*, to quote merely "First performance 12th April 1960", with no mention of the Nijinska creation of this work, or of Ashton's production for the Vic-Wells Ballet? Similarly, although credit is given to Petipa in the creation of *The Sleeping Beauty*, beneath *La Fille mal Gardée* we read "First performed in Bordeaux 1789: First performance by the Royal Ballet 28th January 1960." It is a little hard to credit that Ashton was working in 1789, but from the information given one might almost be forgiven for assuming this. Beneath *Agon* we are told "First performance 20th August 1958". Was not this ballet written by Stravinsky for Balanchine, and would it be too much trouble to find out when it was created? And to read "Previously performed at the Arts Theatre 23rd May 1940" beneath *La Fête Etrange* gives the impression that the work was created by the Royal Ballet. Why not mention, too, that Andrée Howard mounted this ballet for the Theatre Ballet?

Balletomanes may like, however, after they have purchased their copy (as I am sure they all will) to ponder on the alphabetical list of "The Company as at 1st

Continued at foot of column next page

NEW RECORDS—

Continued from page 19

Medea

This score of Samuel Barber's, which he called *Medea*, was specially written for Martha Graham. Her ballet, however, was known as *The Serpent Heart* but later it was changed to *Cave of the Heart*. It roughly follows the legend of Medea and Jason but in effect is the timeless tragedy of love and jealousy. Ancient and modern in fact, which is well brought out in the music. Whether or not you like Graham's ballets, you have to agree that she is a fine dancer and choreographer in her own medium and leaves one plenty to think about. In addition we have Barber's *Capricorn Concerto* for flute, oboe, trumpet and string orchestra—both works are extremely well played by the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson, Mercury AMS16096, and there is not that brassiness frequently met in American recordings (mono MMA11148).

Symphonie Fantastique

This music of Berlioz, which Massine used for his ballet, was superbly interpreted by Beecham in the mono version, HMV. ALP1683, which I reviewed in the May 1959 *Ballet Today* and was excellently recorded. However, as good as it was, in stereo, ASD399, it is superlative. What more can I say, except I am sure that my readers who hear this record, will change over to stereo the moment they have the opportunity.

May I wish all of you the happiest Christmas and particularly those, at present, without a stereo-gramophone—good luck!

BEDFORD CROWLE

NEW BOOKS—Continued

September, 1961." This includes the illustrious name "Margot Fonteyn" sandwiched between those of Leslie Edwards and Christopher Gable. The list then runs on to Grant and Holden, with no mention of that other illustrious guest artist, John Gilpin. Can it be that Dame Margot in fact is only a Guest Artist when it is a question of putting up the price of seats?

Dance Perspectives No. 9.

Frederick Ashton and his Ballets
by Clive Barnes

This little monograph is a fascinating addition to the series, and in it the career, personality and choreography of England's leading choreographer is submitted to a thoughtful and intelligent analysis. Mr. Barnes is, in the opinion of the present writer, the most valuable by far of our younger, post-war ballet critics. He takes immense pains to be fair: he devotes tremendous energy to improving his knowledge of ballet: he has no hobby-horses (or

if he has, he keeps them severely to himself): and simply continues, in the course of a vast amount of writing, to improve and become still more fair, knowledgeable and interesting.

What more can one ask for? Almost the only deficiency of this monograph is that Mr. Barnes, who was born in 1927, is therefore forced to take a slightly unbalanced view of Ashton's work. For example, *Le Baiser de la Fée*, *Horoscope* and *The Wanderer* are, one feels, of great importance in the Ashton saga: Mr. Barnes, through no fault save the accident of birth, can only refer to them at second-hand. Similarly, had he seen *Nocturne* at its first performance with Brae, Fonteyn and Helpmann, he would not dismiss it as a "dime-store novelette". *Giselle* often appears a "tawdry sentimental story", and indeed it is one, but no-one who has seen it danced by Ulanova and Fadeychev would consider using such a description.

Minor errors and omissions, however, are unimportant in comparison with the only serious flaw in this fascinating study. Nowhere throughout the text do we find stated the prime fact about Ashton: he is a woman's choreographer. (So of course is Balanchine; other similarities between the two are well demonstrated.) Ashton is, as Mr. Barnes tells us, a counter-revolutionary, looking back to the work of Petipa; and, though we must give thanks daily for the existence of Ashton and his ballets, we must acknowledge that, in his tendency to reproduce the "porteur" system of the 19th century, his work is flawed. Since Diaghilev brought the Fokine ballets to Paris, since the male dancers of Ballets Russes in the 'thirties, and more recently since Farmanantz, Fadeychev, Khokhlov and the Kirov *Taras Bulba*, we can no longer be fully satisfied with the ballerina-angled ballet theatre. Throughout his long career, Ashton has on only five occasions used the male dancer fully, to the limits of his strength and capacity: Idzikowski in *Les Rendezvous*; Sones in *Horoscope*; Turner in *Les Patineurs*; Helpmann in *The Wanderer*; and—arguably—Grant in *Cinderella*. The rest of his male characters have lifted, swooned, posed and acted about the stage, from *Pomona* to *Les Deux Pigeons*. (One cannot consider Blair's rôle in *La Fille* as anything more than a conventional pastiche of the *porteur* rôles.) This is unfortunate, but it is true, and to avoid mentioning it is to give as one-sided a picture of a great master as would to write of Shakespeare's plays without pointing out that all female rôles were written to be performed by boys.

JANET SINCLAIR

A subscription to *Dance Perspectives* costs £2.2s.0d. a year. Single copies (subject to being available) can be obtained from Mr. Beaumont, 75 Charing Cross Road, London, price 12s. 6d.

ERIK BRUHN

DANCERS are often inarticulate when it comes to expressing themselves in words, and particularly in words set down on paper. This is natural, since when one has learned to express oneself so well as possible in one medium, it must be tedious to do the same in a medium entirely different: and usually it is only a few choreographers and teachers who have the urge, and the facility, to write down theories and practical experience for the benefit of posterity. Indeed, when considering the list of dancers who have published books during the twentieth century, the majority of them were written after active dancing had been abandoned, and most of the dancers concerned were born in the 19th century: it is hard to find a dancer born later than 1909 who has yet found leisure to put anything on paper at all. Dancing life, like ordinary life, is busier today; the pace is so rapid that many dancers must feel they barely have time to draw breath, let alone waste it on words. How fortunate we are, therefore, that Erik Bruhn and Lillian Moore found time to get together and produce their unique book.

Erik Bruhn is, one is tempted to assert, the greatest male classical dancer now appearing outside Russia, and quite possibly the greatest in the world—with all deference to Fadeychev, Khokhlov and Soloviev, the only three contemporary *premiers danseurs* in the same class. Like them, he was trained in a State school. He is one of the very few dancers who go away and come back and have improved in the meantime, so that his reappearance is never a let-down. Each time he dances again after an absence, one is a little apprehensive lest the strength, the power and speed, the pride of carriage and the charm may have diminished in the meantime, or that one may have magnified his particular qualities in one's memory. Even if one has—distance lends enchantment—it simply doesn't matter, because during the years in which he has been away he has expanded his capabilities and effortlessly surpasses what is expected of him.

Bruhn was accepted into the Royal Danish Ballet at the age of 9. He was not at all keen: in fact, he tells us that his aunt, who took him to the audition because his mother was busy, had to bribe him with a kroner (1/-) to get him to sit out the proceedings. Once accepted, however, he soon became acclimatized, and after a couple of years at the school "had begun to feel much better about it." For ten years he was trained in the "Bournonville school," and if you want to know more about this, please buy the book (anyone interested in ballet should buy it anyway). The system of the master had remained

Continued on next page

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AND HIS BOOK ON BOURNONVILLE

Bournonville and Ballet Technique, by Erik Bruhn and Lillian Moore.
A. & C. Black, 21/-.

unchanged—he died in 1879—and it proved a superb training for children whose aim it was to dance in the Bournonville repertoire when they grew up, for the set classes were designed for this purpose. However, when works from outside were added to the repertoire, it was realised that the Bournonville training, admirable as it was for the Bournonville repertoire, was inadequate when tackling the work of other choreographers, and in 1951, during the great reorganisation following the departure of Harald Lander, Vera Volkova was invited to reorganise the school, and she has remained there ever since—to the lasting shame, incidentally, of the English who had her and let her go.

A serious deficiency in the Bournonville training was, of course, the lack of *plié*, commented upon by Bruhn on Page 9 of his book. He must have been immediately aware of this when, shortly after the war, he left Denmark for the first time at the age of 19 and joined Metropolitan Ballet, together with his colleague Poul Gnatt. The audience was equally aware of it, and fortunately, since there were two Danes, the fault could be seen to lie with the training, not the dancers themselves. Bruhn devoted a great deal of thought and took a great deal of trouble in improving his *plié* and it was this which caused the knee trouble which plagued him for nearly twelve months some years ago. Though Bruhn has danced all over the world with American Ballet Theatre he has always returned home for interim periods and it was in 1951, when he was leaving for a second tour with Ballet Theatre, that Svend Kragh-Jacobsen gave him Bournonville's book, *Études chorégraphiques*, which undoubtedly has been an important factor in Bruhn's development, since the study of it in the first place encouraged him to think about teaching methods—and therefore inevitably apply the conclusions reached to his own dancing. When we first met him socially in 1951, he was just about to begin teaching in Denmark, and was full of ideas about it, the most striking of the lot being that he was pleased to be working with beginners, since this was the most important stage of all. He soon found that teaching as well as dancing meant that one side had to suffer, and had to give up teaching for the time being. But his interest in the subject has remained constant to the present day.

What has made Bruhn the outstanding dancer he is today is, of course, a combination of factors. He had ten years' work in a State ballet school, with stage experience from the beginning: and he has the brains to understand fully the advantages and disadvantages of this and other techniques. He has varied experience of many rôles and many choreographers (Petit and particularly Balanchine were those he singled out as rewarding to work with), and last but not least he has an ideal physique, strengthened by ballet exercises, to the point where one feels that here is Apollo himself on the stage, or a living Michelangelo. It seems almost unfair that anybody should be so gifted—a straight back, long legs neither noticeably knock-kneed nor bowed: the strong flexible foot of the

Bournonville dancer: aristocratic hands combining strength with elegance and a fine head well set on good shoulders. Above all, he is a man, with a man's fire and physical exuberance, and his partner benefits by contrast. Off-stage Bruhn has the characteristic sleepy relaxed look of most great male dancers. He is quiet, slow-moving, thoughtful, and thinks before he speaks: he converses with consideration. Moreover it is hard to get him to talk about himself, and his manner is exactly the same whether backstage in his dressing-room, at supper at an expensive American country club, in an Espresso bar or in the audience watching other dancers perform. On stage at performance he becomes a god, every gallery girl's golden boy, the darling of the theatre. This is, of course, partly due to the magnificent ease and perfect timing of his dancing: partly to his appearance, and his quiet confidence (only the Soviet dancers can 'throw away' technique with such cool assurance): to his beautiful manners and unhurried partnering; but above all to the projection of his own personality. Not only does he know his job superlatively well, but despite the fact that he has been acclaimed throughout the Western world, there is no ostentation or vulgarity in his dancing. He can, and he knows that he can: the audience watching him only has to sit back and enjoy the waves of glorious movement, effortlessly projected into the theatre.

Bruhn has no particular ambition, except, he says, "to keep dancing and doing more and more different parts". He was very happy to have had the chance in Denmark recently of dancing Don José in Petit's *Carmen* and, though he never boasts, we gained the impression that he was reasonably satisfied with his performance. He also much enjoyed tackling the rôle of Jean in *Miss Julie* for Ballet Theatre. "It was so interesting" he told us "to think about how to bring out the two different sides in the man's character, now good, now bad: for we are all good and bad, aren't we, not just one thing or the other?" This naturally led us on to sound him out about rôles he has not yet tackled, such as Petrouchka. While he agreed that he would always want to try new rôles, the only one which drew a strongly positive response from him was that of the Witch Boy; he had seen the ballet in Denmark and would much enjoy the opportunity to tackle the rôle if it ever came his way.

"When you're very young" he told us "you think a lot of nonsense about being the greatest dancer in the world, and all that. When you get a bit older, you begin to realise what material you've got, and think about how to make the best of it." A supreme piece of modest speaking from one who could with some justification claim to be the greatest classical male dancer in the world at the present time. But in this Bruhn is like every other really great artist: he has no great opinion of himself. And when humility and high intelligence are added to the superb physical instrument, the result is a criterion by which audience and performers alike can set their standards for many years to come.



Erik Bruhn

Photo: Maurice Seymour

INTERVIEW

WITH THE AUTHOR

by

JANET and LEO KERSLEY



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When this book was first published for 5/- by Penguin it was one of the best bargains ever, and now that it has been brought out in hard covers at 18/- it is still a book which it is to be hoped that all ballet-lovers can afford. Such a reference book is invaluable and though it seems a pity that this one was not reprinted in its original form, better this edition than none.

Everybody in ballet knows who G. B. L. Wilson is for in addition to being an indefatigable photographer of dancers he is active in connection with the R.A.D. and the Association of Ballet Clubs. Mr. Wilson did a fine job on the original edition of the Dictionary. How sad to have to report that he did not find time, during the four years which have elapsed between the two editions, to clear up all the inevitable errors and omissions occurring in the Penguin version. Mr. Wilson justly gives full marks for accuracy to the late Lionel Bradley: it is ironic that seldom has the absence of a Bradley been so sadly felt as when reading these pages. Bradleys are rare, but why not get someone to read the proofs? Scores of printers' errors in dates could have been eliminated: we should not have had "Hintin" for "Hinton" (P. 207), "Ailor's Return" for *Sailor's Return* (P. 255), "Khokhlov" for "Khokhlov" (P. 165) and many other unnecessary misprints. Also, why did no-one point out to Mr. Wilson that he has written "Idzikowski", "Woizikowski", "Brianski" in one place, "Idzikowsky", "Woizikowsky" and "Briansky" in another?

A Bradley would also have pointed out that in a book of this kind, containing particulars of many nonentities, it is inconsistent to omit mention of Tania Bari, Angela Bayley, Lilian Baylis, Gillert, Michael Hogan, Michael Holmes, Deryck Mendel, Norman MacDowell, Kyra Nijinsky, Dimitri Romanoff and Job Sanders: while ballets such as Fokine's *Eros*, *Papillons* and *Stenka Razin*, de Mille's *Three Virgins* and *A Devil*, Ashton's *The Lord of Burleigh* (in which Fonteyn danced with Markova) and *Le Diable s'Amuse* surely deserve a mention.

On the technical side it is sad to relate that errors are legion. For example, a *balançoire* (P. 21) is not the same as a *battement en cloche*, *ballonné* (P. 32) is not "any broad bounding movement", and *chassé* (P. 63) is never done as a "jumping step" (try it!), neither does a *detourné* (P. 93) change direction—that is a *demi-detourné*. What "large number of different steps" are known by the term "emboîté"? (P. 107). Mr. Wilson's description of the numbering of *entrechats* (P. 108) does not seem correct or logical to me. *Attitude* (P. 16) can be performed in front, as well as behind. The point about *assemblé* (P. 15) is that it is a step from one foot on to two: there are many "leaps in which the dancer brings the feet together before alighting" apart from *assemblé*.

Does *éffacé* (P. 105) in French literally translate as "shaded"? Not according to my dictionary. *Pas de zéphire* (P. 222) is described by Mr. Wilson as *battements en cloche*: in *pas de zéphire* the dancer does not stand, he hops (*temps levé*). Mr. Wilson also tells us (P. 231) "*Plié* or *demi-plié* is the start of every step of elevation" (my italics). Could Mr. Wilson give us a short list of any steps which do not start from *plié* or *demi-plié*? I will personally give him sixpence for any step (not pose or single movement) apart from *chainés* which he can list for me, and perform, without preparatory *plié* or *demi-plié*. It also seems odd that amidst all these inaccurate descriptions the term *opposition* is not even mentioned, despite the importance with which Noverre and Blais invested this point.

All these errors and many others which space does not permit me to quote are, of course, ones which could be put right with very little trouble. More serious, however, are errors and omissions which concern historical fact. We are given no date for the change in title from "Vic-Wells" to "Sadler's Wells": no date for the termination of the policy of Lilian Baylis of exchanges between companies playing the Vic and the Wells (so far as I personally remember, this was the 1935/36 season): no reference to the visit to Copenhagen in 1932. It is also odd that no reference is made under the entry "Sadler's Wells Ballet" to the fact that the guest artists of the company included Lydia Lopokova and Stanislas Idzikowski!

The entry on pages 171-2 on Constant Lambert—with de Valois, Ashton and Baylis one of the four pillars upon which the edifice of the Royal Ballet rests—is misleading in the extreme. *Pomona* was not composed for Sadler's Wells in 1927, but for the Camargo Society in 1930 (given by the Vic-Wells Ballet 1933). "Rio Grande" was orchestral music first performed in 1929: Ashton later made a ballet to this score for the Camargo Society in 1931, and reproduced it for the Vic-Wells Ballet in 1935. No mention is made of Lambert's "Adam and Eve" specially composed for Tudor in 1932, nor of his musical assistance to Helpmann. When the entry for a person of such importance to English ballet is so incomplete and inaccurate, how can one have much faith in other entries?

However, it is when we come to the entry "Original Ballet Russe" that confusion reigns supreme, and the same applies to the entry by Anatole Chujoy in his *Dance Encyclopaedia* (1948). Below I set out the correct sequence of events in order once for all.

LEO KERSLEY

THE BALLETS RUSSES

THE affairs of what can only be described, for lack of a better term, as Ballets Russes in the 1930s were such a muddle that it is little wonder that those without personal experience of the period can make neither head nor tail of the confusion, now perpetrated in most books and dictionaries written from hearsay.

Diaghilev died on 19th August 1929. London's next sight of Ballets Russes was in 1931, when Prince A. Zereteli and Colonel W. de Basil brought "Opera Russe à Paris" to the Lyceum Theatre (now a dance hall) in May and June. Sir Thomas Beecham was Artistic Director, and Chaliapin sang in "Boris" and "Roussalka". In addition to collaboration in opera performances, there were seven independent ballet performances, including *Petrushka*, Boris Romanoff's versions of *Pulcinella*, *Chout*, *El Amor Brujo* and Nijinska's *Capriccio* and *Etude*. Eugene Goossens was ballet conductor, Boris Romanoff ballet master and also leading dancer, together with Doubrowska, Oboukhoff, Marra and Algeranoff.

At the same time, René Blum, who had worked with Diaghilev during the latter's seasons in Monte Carlo, gathered together Balanchine, Massine, Grigoriev and many ex-Diaghilev dancers to join him in a new enterprise. Col. de Basil joined him, and after many vicissitudes—Balanchine left to form another company—London first saw the company at the Alhambra (now a cinema) on July 4th 1933. The programme consisted of *Les Sylphides* (with Dolin), *Les Présages*, the first of Massine's symphonic ballets (Baronova, Verchinina, Riabouchinska, Lichine, Woizikowsky) and *Le Beau Danube* (Danilova, Massine). Balanchine ballets in the repertoire were *Cotillon* and *La Concurrency*: Massine had created *Jeux d'Enfants*, *Beach* and *Scuola di Ballo*. The rest of the repertoire consisted of Act II of *Swan Lake*, *Aurora's Wedding*, the standard Massine and Fokine works and Nijinsky's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*. Leading dancers, in addition to those already quoted, were Tchernichova, Zorina and Shabelevsky. Toumanova was

dancing with a rival troupe, "Les Ballets 1933", directed by Balanchine at the Savoy Theatre, but she joined de Basil at the Alhambra before the end of their season, which was extended from an initial three weeks to four months. On October 24th 1933 Massine added his finest symphonic ballet, *Choreartium*, to the repertoire.

This company, under one name or another and always connected with Col. de Basil (though his name disappeared from the programme in 1938 and 1939), appeared at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden every succeeding summer up to and including 1939. In 1934, the company roster was unaltered except for the disappearance of Woizikowsky, and the only additions to the repertoire were Massine's *Union Pacific* and Lichine's *Les Imaginaires*. In 1935 Blum resigned from the company, leaving de Basil in sole charge together with Massine, and London saw Massine's *Le Bal* and *Jardin Public* while Nijinska's *Les Cent Baisers* (Baronova, Lichine) was premièred at the Royal Opera House on 18th July, 1935.

During this year London also saw the National Ballet of Lithuania, with Nemchinova, Oboukhoff, Zwerev and Panaieff, at the Alhambra, Iskoldoff's "Les Ballets Russes de Paris" with Krassovska/Leslie and Wilzak at Daly's (now pulled down to make room for a cinema) and the Ballets de Leon Woizikowsky at the Coliseum with Tarakanova, Eglevsky and Youskevitch.

In 1936, the birth of a new company was announced. This was the Ballets de Monte Carlo, Artistic Director René Blum. (Col. de Basil's company at this point became "Col. W. de Basil's Ballets Russes (de Monte Carlo)"). Michel Fokine was resident choreographer and the leading dancers were Nemchinova, Krassovska/Leslie, Tarakanova, the South American Marie Ruanova, and Jeannette Lauret, while the males included Eglevsky, Wilzak, Zwerev, Judson (of the Vic-Wells Ballet), Panaieff and Louis Lebercher (the finest Pierrot in the present writer's experience).

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There is a photograph of Woizikowskiy in a programme dated 8th June, 1936, but so far as can be traced, he did not in fact dance with this company in London.

Fokine mounted *Les Sylphides*, *Carnaval*, *Petrouchka*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, *Prince Igor*, and *Schéhérazade*, and created *L'Epreuve d'Amour* and *Don Juan*. Act II of *Swan Lake*, Roris Romanoff's *Casse Noisette* (with Eglevsky as Drosselmeyer), and Balanchine's *Aubade* made up the programme.

The de Basil season at Covent Garden included the premières of Massine's *Symphonie Fantastique* on 24th July, 1936 (Massine, Toumanova, Verchinina, Shabelevsky) and Lichine's *Le Pavillon* (Baronova, Riabouchinska, Lichine) on 11th August, 1936.

By summer of 1937 the Alhambra had been demolished to make room for a cinema, so the Blum company (Ballets de Monte Carlo) went to the Coliseum, premiering Fokine's *Les Elements*, *Igrouchka* and *Jota Aragonesa*. The company was sadly depleted of good dancers, though the American Nana Gollner danced with them and was a remarkable Swanilda in *Coppelia*. In contrast, only Toumanova and Zorina were missing from "Col. W. de Basil's Ballets Russes", which opened at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden on July 1st, 1937, with a revival of Massine's *Cimarosiana*. Nijinska's *Danses Slaves et Tziganes* was shortly after added to the repertoire, on the gala night when Kchessinska appeared. Other new ballets were by Lichine, *Francesca da Rimini* (15th July, 1937), *Les Dieux Mendiants* (17th September, 1937) and *Le Lion Amoureux* (6th October, 1937) with Nikitina. There were no new works by Massine, between whom and de Basil dissension had reached the pitch where on 10th July a report appeared in the press of an action brought by Massine to restrain de Basil from asserting that he was the owner of the copyright of one of Massine's ballets. This question had reached the courts the previous year, but agreement had been reached at the time. The hearing took several days, and the result was that of the seventeen ballets which Massine had mounted for de Basil, rights in the nine new works created were exclusively the Colonel's while of the eight pre-de Basil revivals, those four revived before 14th August, 1934 (the date on which the two parties had signed a new contract) were Massine's property, and those four revived after that date were the Colonel's, if he took up his option upon them—this he had already signified his intention of doing.

On the opening night, programme credits listed Col. W. de Basil as Founder and Director-General: Maître de Ballet and Artistic Collaborator—Leonide Massine: Choreographer—David Lichine. At some time between this date (Thursday, 1st July) and the following Monday, 5th July, the words "Ballets by Michel Fokine under his personal supervision" were added to the programme, above all other credits. Fokine's first addition to the repertoire was unfortunate. *Cleopatra* (27th July), originally produced for Diaghilev in 1909, was given only one performance for during *L'Oiseau de Feu* which followed the première Danilova injured her foot so seriously that she could not dance until the second part of the season on 6th September, and *Cleopatra*, in which she danced Ta-Hor, was never given again.

Massine gave his final performance with this company on Saturday, 31st July, after which the company went on holiday until 6th September. One can only conclude that it was with deliberate ill-will that the Colonel put him on only in *La Boutique Fantasque*, the opening ballet of the evening (though it was nothing to see him dance in all three ballets in an evening) to avoid any possibility of demonstrations at curtain-fall, for exactly the same had been done at the matinée (*Le Beau Danube*). When Massine emerged from the stage door after the matinée, the crowd was thicker in Floral Street than at any time in the memory of the present writer: it was literally impossible to move out of his way to let him get to his car. When finally, after a lot of organised shoving and pushing, he got through the crowd, he sat signing autographs for nearly an hour. After the evening's performance, the same thing happened again and eventually he looked up with a tired smile and said "You are all my friends, and I would do anything for you." Naturally the only answer was "Come back! Just come back!"

The second half of de Basil's season was something of an anti-climax. Fokine mounted a balletic version of his *Le Coq d'Or*, but this was a disappointment to those who remembered his production of the complete opera/ballet in 1914, though Baronova danced superbly in Karsavina's rôle of Queen of Shemakhan. On the opening night, Monday, 6th September, the note apropos Massine was still on the programme, but at some time between 15th and 18th it disappeared, to be replaced by the cryptic message: "Artistic adviser for new productions: Henry Clifford."

In 1938 the ballet war hit London with a bang. First in the field was what we referred to in those days as "de Basil" tout court at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden on Monday, 20th June. The only title on the programme was the ambiguous "Season of Russian Ballet"* and the only credits given were to Fokine, Lichine

* See programme 1 next page.


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SEASON OF
RUSSIAN BALLET
 Friday, July 22nd, 1938, at 8.45 p.m.

JEUX D'ENFANTS
 (Children's Games)
 Ballet by Boris KOCHNO
 Music by Georges BIZET
 Curtain, Scenery, Costumes and Designs by Joan MIRO
 Choreography by Léonide MASSINE


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SEASON OF
RUSSIAN BALLET
 Saturday, Sept. 10th, 1938, at 8.45 p.m.

CARNAVAL
 Ballet in One Act
 Choreography by Michel FOKINE

Two programmes headed "Season of Russian Ballet"

Programme 1—see last paragraph page 26

Programme 2—see this page

and Grigoriev, though so far as one can discover the company was directed by Victor Dandré, G. Sevastianov and W. Perkins and it rejoiced in the official name of "Educational Ballets Ltd." Leading dancers were Tchernichova, Baronova, Nemchinova, Riabouchinska, Grigorieva, Osato, Lichine, Shabelevsky, Petroff, Jasinsky and Lazovsky. New ballets were Fokine's *Cendrillon* (19th July, 1938) and Lichine's *Protée* (5th July, 1938).

On Tuesday, 12th July, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, managing director Sergei Denham, Artistic Director Leonide Massine, Artistic Collaborator Boris Kochno, "Season under the direction of S. Hurok", opened at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Leading dancers were Danilova, Markova, Toumanova, Slavenska, Theilade, Tarakanova, Leslie/Krassovska, Rostova, Massine, Lifar, Youskevitch, Franklin, Panaieff, Guerard, Platoff. The company preserved most of the Fokine repertoire, and gave Massine's *Le Tricorne* and *Le Beau Danube*, while new works presented were Massine's *Seventh Symphony* (opening night), *Gaîté Parisienne* (14th July) and *Nobilissima Visione* (21st July, 1938). *Giselle* was revived with Markova and Lifar (later Toumanova and Youskevitch) with Danilova as Myrtha; the curtain went up thirty minutes late on the first performance and in the interval it came to blows in the gallery, since the Markova factions told the Lifar factions they wished Lifar would not carry on as if he thought the ballet ought to have been entitled "Albrecht". Lifar even went so far as to raise his head from Giselle's lifeless bosom, acknowledge applause and then return to his previous prostrate position and he was booed with enthusiasm at curtain fall; even if one disliked his performance one could not help but admire the almost savage dignity with which he insisted upon facing a storm of disapproval to take his solo call at the end of the performance. It was at this period that a determined balletomane could see a couple of ballets at Drury Lane, run like the wind to Covent Garden (passing a lot of his fellows performing the same exercise in reverse) and catch the last ballet there, and thus see almost every great dancer in the Western world on the same evening, for by the end of the Covent Garden season Woizikowsky was dancing *Prince Igor* there.

At the conclusion of these rival seasons, "Educational Ballets Ltd." (which we went right on stubbornly calling "de Basil") left for a tour of Australia. Massine's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo moved in on 5th September, 1938,* to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, which blithely continued to use the same heading on its programme, viz. "Season of Russian Ballet", until at least 10th September, though by 13th September something had dawned and the heading was changed to "Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo". *Coppelia* was remounted and gave Danilova one of her most dazzling rôles.

On 19th June, 1939, "Educational Ballets Ltd." presented a season of "Covent Garden Russian Ballet" at the Royal Opera

* See programme 2 above.

House. Verchinina—absent since 1937—had returned; other leading dancers were Tchernichova, Baronova, Riabouchinska, Osato, Denisova, Dolin, Lichine, Lazovsky, Rostoff, Jasinsky. (Mona Inglesby appeared in the corps de ballet of *Aurora's Wedding*.) Lichine's *Fils Prodigue* (Dolin, Baronova) and Fokine's *Paganini* (30th June, 1939) were the only novelties. The Royal Opera House closed down during the month of August. On 4th September, 1939, we awaited a two weeks' season of Massine's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Five new ballets were announced: Massine's *Rouge et Noir*, *Capriccio Espagnol*, *Venusberg* and *Bogatyi*, plus the first production for Ballets Russes by an English choreographer, *Le Diable s'Amuse* (Danilova, Platoff) by Frederick Ashton. The company was substantially the same as it had been the year previously, save for the absence of Lifar, who had quarrelled with Massine in New York. ("Lifar challenges Massine to a duel in Central Park!" the newspapers told us. Massine's reply was quoted as "Don't be silly. Take an aspirin.") On the day before the season should have opened, war was declared. A whole way of civilisation was gone, and with it Ballets Russes as we knew them.

The end of de Basil was a sad one. After wartime vicissitudes an attempt was made to regenerate the company, and it did in fact perform at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (1947) as "Original Ballets Russes", at which time Massine—an echo of old times—threatened to sue the company for presenting *Le Beau Danube* with his choreography ascribed to Lifar. Dancers, choreographers, productions and artistic direction were mediocre, and though de Basil attempted to make a new start in 1951, he died before any worth-while results were achieved and the company finally petered out with a whimper under the direction of George Kirsta in 1952. The sole ballet of any enduring merit to be presented since Massine left the company was Lichine's *Graduation Ball* (1940).

The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo fared little better, though it is still in existence today. Massine remained in charge in America until 1942; several new ballets were produced, but none have survived save de Mille's *Rodeo* (16th October, 1942). Nijinska and Balanchine both worked with the company at various periods after Massine had left, Balanchine producing his *Night Shadow* (Danilova) in 1946, but after he left in 1948 the company settled down into the position it now occupies—a touring American company living on past glories. It has not given a New York season for many years, and, as it is now constituted, has never been seen in Europe, both the Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo and the Ballets de Monte Carlo du Marquis de Cuevas being entirely different companies.

This summary, though lengthy, is nevertheless the shortest within the capabilities of the present writer, and possibly some important points have been overlooked. The author would be most grateful to receive any corrections or emendations which readers can make from personal experience.

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